



IWAO TAKAMOTO

My Life with a Thousand Characters



Iwao Takamoto with Michael Mallory · FOREWORD BY WILLIE ITO

8.
347
TAK

DOLTON PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT



3 1146 00337 7946

IWAO TAKAMOTO

DOLTON PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

708 849-2385



IWAO TAKAMOTO

My Life with a Thousand Characters

Iwao Takamoto

with Michael Mallory

Foreword by Willie Ito



University Press of Mississippi
Jackson

www.upress.state.ms.us

The University Press of Mississippi is a member of the Association of American University Presses.

Copyright © 2009 by Barbara Takamoto and Michael Mallory
All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States of America

First printing 2009

∞

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Takamoto, Iwao.

Iwao Takamoto : my life with a thousand characters / Iwao Takamoto with Michael Mallory ; foreword by Willie Ito.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 978-1-60473-193-4 (cloth : alk. paper) —

ISBN 978-1-60473-194-1 (paper : alk. paper) 1. Takamoto, Iwao.
2. Animators—United States—Biography. 3. Animation (Cinematography) I. Mallory, Michael. II. Title.

TR849.T35A3 2009

778.5'347092—dc22

[B]

2008031746

British Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data available

CONTENTS

Foreword by Willie Ito vii

Note to the Reader xi

Introduction: I Am Legend? 3

Chapter 1. A Kid of the City 9

Chapter 2. A Japanese American in the Time of War 22

Chapter 3. Manzanar 29

Chapter 4. Nine Old Men and a Guy Named Walt 44

Chapter 5. Milt 57

Chapter 6. Tales from D-Wing, and All That Jazz 66

Chapter 7. Changes 75

Chapter 8. Bill and Joe 87

Chapter 9. Hardworking Artists and “Lazy Lucy” 103

Chapter 10. Taking on Responsibility by Design . . . or Otherwise 112

Chapter 11. Reinventing the TV Toon with “Jonny Quest”
and “Scooby-Doo” 123

Chapter 12. International Expansion 134

Chapter 13. Falling into “Charlotte’s Web” 144

Chapter 14. Hanna-Barbera Branches Out 152

Chapter 15. The Busiest Place on Earth 159

Chapter 16. A Studio in Flux and a New Role as “Ambassador” 167

Chapter 17. An Era Ends; A Legacy Lives On 185

Index 195

FOREWORD

In 1945, the war was still raging in the Pacific but the inevitable end was near. One hundred twenty thousand *Nikkeis*—Japanese Americans—were incarcerated in a string of concentration camps set up in remote, sand-swept locations in the desert. Many young citizens in their teens were greatly affected by being forced into these camps. Their quest for a good education, which had been impressed upon them by their parents, and the pursuit of a productive future was all but interrupted. However, life went on through making the most of a bad situation.

One young man whose life was greatly affected by incarceration in the camp called Manzanar voraciously drew. Disney studio personnel saw these drawings and he was sought after. Even as the war continued, the talented teenager left Manzanar to join the animation department of Walt Disney Studios. He was a pioneer *Nisei* (a second-generation Japanese American), entering a Hollywood industry at this sensitive time in history. Despite his youth he quickly became a respected member of the Disney studios. There were a few *Nikkeis* in the animation industry prior to the war, but one young man, Iwao Takamoto, paved the path for all of us *Niseis*, making for a much easier postwar assimilation.

I first became aware of the name Iwao Takamoto through a buddy of mine who was a good friend of Iwao's brother, Robert. One Christmas, my friend received a card from Robert that had been drawn by Iwao. It was a typical Christmas theme with Santa Claus, but it was so well drawn—Disney like—that I was blown away. My friend said, "Robert's brother is Iwao Takamoto, who worked at Disney Studio." That became imbedded in the back of my mind.

The first time I set foot on the lot of the Walt Disney Studios was July 1954. I was there to interview for a job as an animator. I was very intimidated being

on the Disney lot. Then I found myself sharing the elevator up to personnel with Walt Disney himself, and that was doubly intimidating! In the personnel office, the manager said: "Wait here and we'll call in the group to look at your portfolio." When Iwao Takamoto entered the office in the personnel department, the feeling of intimidation was at its peak. He was small in stature, stoic, and very serious looking. He wore his hair in a crew cut. But when we were introduced he broke out in a wide, warm smile and I immediately lost any feelings of intimidation. Iwao could see I was a little nervous about the whole thing, yet he was very kind to me.

After the interview, I was asked to wait in the outer office while Iwao, the personnel manager, and the production executive discussed my portfolio. I was given a polite, "Thanks for coming, don't call us, we'll call you." But I was still a student at Chouinard Art School and I figured, "I'll study hard and work up a good portfolio, and four years after I get my degree, then I'll seriously look for a job at Disney studios."

Two weeks later, I received a Western Union telegram. Telegrams generally meant good news or bad. As it turned out, it was good news asking me to report to the Disney studios the following Monday. Of course, I reported to Iwao.

That morning I was immediately put to my challenges. I was assigned a series of Disney characters to draw and turn in before lunch. After lunch I was given the results: I was to be assigned to what was called the "Lady unit." Thinking I was assigned to the Ink and Paint Department, which was made up of mainly ladies, I accepted the news with mixed emotions.

I soon realized that "Lady" referred to one of the title characters of *Lady and the Tramp*, which was currently in production, and Iwao was the key clean-up artist in charge of Lady herself. He had already been at Disney for nine years and had made his mark. At that time you could count the Nikkeis in the animation industry on one hand.

Iwao Takamoto became my mentor, my *sensei* (teacher), and my friend. I have to admit, training under him was very intense because he was a perfectionist who expected those under him to be the same. Being a fellow Nikkei raised the bar a notch for me. I couldn't have had a better sensei, however. He was very soft spoken and when an animator would stand over him at the drawing board, he would have to really pay attention to Iwao's instructions. He would take the time to spend with us even though we all had drawing quotas to maintain.

During the hiatus between productions at Disney I moved on to Warner Bros. cartoon studios. Advancement came quickly due to Iwao's training. I re-

mained at Warner's for the next six years before our paths crossed again as both of us went to work for a fledgling studio known as Hanna-Barbera Productions. We were both assigned to the development and production of a new show called *The Jetsons*. The rest is history.

The following fourteen years that I spent at Hanna-Barbera, again working with Iwao, was such a great learning experience. He was truly an icon. His prolific creativity and unique ability to create both whimsical and serious characters never ceased to amaze me. Versatility is the word.

Recently I attended a reunion of Heart Mountain survivors. Although I was "sentenced" to Topaz, Utah, during the war, all of the camps were very similar in environment, weather, and harsh conditions. Many of the delegates attending were of Iwao's generation, but the animation industry was foreign to them. They thought Walt Disney did it all by himself. I spoke of Iwao, and hearing of his accomplishments was of great interest to them.

Iwao Takamoto has left a legacy to the animation industry and also to the many Nikkeis who are following his path.

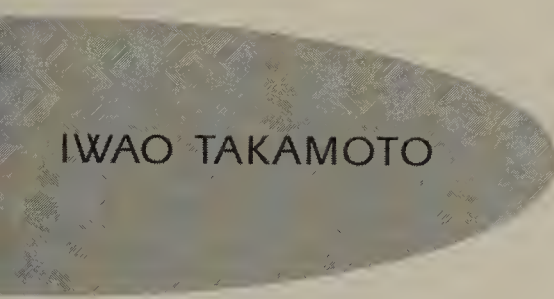
Willie Ito

NOTE TO THE READER

In the kind of coincidence that a fiction writer would not dare to put forth, the very day that the second round of corrections and changes were input into the manuscript for this book, January 8, 2007, Iwao Takamoto suddenly took ill and died. It was a shocking tragedy.

But this book is not about sadness, since Iwao Takamoto was not about sadness. He was about joy and laughter and warmth and mirth and wisdom; he was a man who brightened the days of everyone who knew him.

The voice, then, that narrates this book is Iwao Takamoto as his friends, family, and co-workers knew him. It is in the first person and present tense because that is the way he left it. This is his story, in his words, and it remains as alive and vibrant as his legacy.



IWAO TAKAMOTO

I AM LEGEND?

In animation, the field in which I have worked over the course of sixty years, the smallest, seemingly most inconsequential differences between one drawing and another can sometimes result in the most telling effect. That, in fact, is an important component of animating a scene: lining up all those small differences, one after another, until the desired result, whether comedic or tragic, or something in the middle, is achieved. The funny thing is, sometimes life works that way, too.

Mine, for instance.

The direction of my life changed course almost overnight as the result of a telephone call I placed sometime in 1945. So many years after the fact, I cannot remember the exact date, or even the exact month, though I recall it as being prior to VE Day—May 8, 1945—the date on which the Allied Forces celebrated the fall of Germany, which was the beginning of the end of World War II. Had I been able to anticipate the effect that day would ultimately have on the direction of my professional and personal life, I might have written it down.

The call was to the Walt Disney Studios in Burbank, California. I had only recently become a civilian again, but that does not mean I had served in the military. Like every person of my nationality—Japanese American—on the West Coast, I had lived the past four years with my family in an internment camp. Ours was Manzanar, a barren tract that was located in the shadow of snow-capped mountains in California's Owens Valley, about two hundred miles northeast of Los Angeles.

While encamped there, I had met two gentlemen, whose names I likewise did not record, who had worked as art directors in the Hollywood studios, one for Paramount and one for MGM. They had recognized in me some artistic ability, maybe even more than I then recognized in myself, and they

suggested that I consider attending art school and entering the field of commercial art professionally when we were all finally allowed back into society. At the time, I did not feel like I had either the time or finance to attend art school. Then one of them talked about how he was going to return to Japan when the war was over and get into the field of comic books, or *manga*. He even offered to take me with him, but I was not particularly interested in traveling across the Pacific to draw comic books. Ultimately, they suggested that perhaps the Walt Disney Studio was the place for me to be, believing that Walt's animation emporium was fueled by a liberal enough attitude as to hire a person who demonstrated ability, regardless of his lack of experience in the animation business (or any business, for that matter), who was also a member of a race that Hollywood was currently vilifying at every opportunity on screen, and the United States Government was judging to be something between a potential danger and a menace to freedom.

I was neither, of course. I was a nineteen-year-old kid who had grown up in what might be considered a tough section of downtown Los Angeles, without many prospects, except for the vague notion that I might want to pursue a career in architecture, so the Disney lead sounded good to me. There was only one problem: I did not have the faintest idea how to go about selling myself to a major studio.

That did not stop me, however, and with what in retrospect might be called prime initiative, but what at the time seemed more like the luck of the ignorant, I found the phone number for the Disney Studios in Burbank and placed the call. A woman answered the phone, and I told her that I wanted to apply for work.

"In which department are you seeking work?" she asked, quite naturally.

Standing there with the telephone in my hand and the Disney Studio at the other end of the line, it dawned on me for the first time that there were many different kinds of jobs that were done every day at movie studios, positions that did not have anything to do with drawing. There were jobs in advertising, publicity, even accounting or business-related matters. Since I was not qualified for anything like that, I replied that I was seeking a position in the animation department.

Now, for those who are not connected with the industry itself, the term "animation" probably registers as work done by anybody who has anything to do with the creation of animated films, whether short or feature length. Within the industry, however, it is a very specific term. *Animation* is the work done by an animator: the creation of key movement and action drawings that are essential to bringing a character to life. There are many, many other func-

tions that occur within the process of creating animated cartoons that are not, strictly speaking, *animation*. Had I known that on that one day sometime in the first half of 1945, today I might be a retired architect.

“Fine,” the woman replied, and she gave me a time to show up at the studio. “Oh,” she added, “make sure you bring your portfolio.” I assured her I would and hung up the phone. I then turned my thoughts to trying to figure out what a portfolio was.

Figuring that it had to have something to do with the presentation of my work, I dashed off to the five-and-ten-cent store (for the benefit of readers who may be under the age of, say, forty, the five-and-dime was a kind of shop, now extinct, that offered a vast variety of goods from household wares to simple clothing items at a low price; perhaps its modern descendant might be the 99-Cent store) and bought two pads of paper. At that time, even that made something of a dent in my budget. My interview was to take place the next week, so I spent the entire weekend leading up to it filling these two pads with drawings of everything I could think to draw.

On the prescribed day, I set out for Burbank from the post-camp relocation hostel in which I was living in Boyle Heights, which was an older neighborhood in East Los Angeles that was then home to a variety of ethnic cultures, including Hispanic, Russian, Jewish, and Japanese. Today, of course, I would simply jump on the freeway, but the freeways—including the one that now runs virtually to the front gate of the Walt Disney Studio—did not yet exist. In 1945, particularly for people with my financial resources, there was the trolley car. The trip took about two hours.

When I got to the Disney Studio, I was led to a waiting area, and I discovered that I was not the only animation hopeful there to present his work for review. I went in and sat down beside several other men, all of whom looked older than I was (which, admittedly, was not that difficult at the time). Each one of them was carrying a large, impressive-looking black leather portfolio. I, meanwhile, had my five-and-dime pads. The other prospective animators were all talking among themselves, and I could hear little snippets of conversation. One was saying: “Even if they don’t hire me here, I already have an interview set up at Warners.” At that time, of course, Warner Bros. had one of the top cartoon units in Hollywood, where such great practitioners of the art form as Chuck Jones and Friz Freleng put the likes of Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck through their comic paces. Their only real competition was over at MGM, which had Tex Avery and a couple young guys named Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera, who were starting to hit their strides with the very funny “Tom and Jerry” series.

But back on that day in 1945, I did not know any of this. I did not know that Warner Bros. had an animation studio. I thought they still made gangster pictures. But I quickly learned to *learn*. I sat there among all these obviously experienced “animators” and did my best to assimilate the information, most of which was a total revelation to me.

After some time my name was called, and I stepped into a room for my interview. My interviewer was an ex-animator named Mique Nelson. It was pronounced “Mike,” but spelled in that oddly Parisian fashion. “Let’s see your work,” he said, and having seen all those lavish leather portfolios, I handed over my ten-cent pads with a sinking feeling, wondering what I had gotten myself into. Mique Nelson started to look at them . . . and look at them . . . and look at them . . . and it seemed like he was going to go on looking at them forever. While he did so, I sat there, thinking: *How long does it take for a guy to figure out a polite way to say, ‘Don’t call us, we’ll call you?’*” But Mique Nelson surprised me. Instead of giving me a polite brush-off, he said: “Are you in a hurry? Can you stick around for about fifteen, twenty minutes?”

There was no place more important I had to be, so I assured him that I could.

“I’ll be back,” he said, and disappeared, taking these two pads with him. In the meantime, I wandered back out into the waiting area, lit up a cigarette, and started to kibbutz with the secretary. I was already smoking at that time, but back then, everybody smoked. Many people copied those they saw on the screen. I figured that if I could look sophisticated and knowledgeable by sticking a cigarette in my head and lighting it, maybe then they wouldn’t notice that I had bought my portfolio at a dime store.

Just as he had promised, Mique Nelson came back in about fifteen or twenty minutes and called me once more into the interview room. He started flipping through those pages I had drawn again. Then he looked up at me, and I thought: *Here it comes*.

But instead of saying something like *Thanks for coming in* or *We’ll be in touch*, and handing my drawing pads back to me, he asked, “Can you start Monday?”

“I think so,” I said.

I don’t really remember the trip back home.

That Monday I started as an inbetweener—an entry-level animator who fills in the drawings in between one defining animation pose and the next—at the Walt Disney Studio, which reset the direction of my life professionally and personally for the next sixty years.

Looking at it in retrospect, I suppose it was sort of a unique experience for the man reviewing the portfolios to be presented with something other than the kind of art-school-dictated format that the other applicants had shown him. Maybe what Mique Nelson spotted was a quality in those drawings that indicated a measure of trainability. I know that I never saw any of those other guys who were there with their leather portfolios again. Perhaps that day was a turning point in their lives, too. At the time, though, I did not really stop to question it.

The truth is, there were many, many times during the course of those six decades when I didn't bother to stop and question something, I just did it. I did it to the best of my abilities, of course, but I considered it to be simply part of the job—a job I greatly enjoyed and had a lot of fun with. But today I sometimes find myself marveling at the impact that those cartoons and films that all of us at Disney's, and later at Hanna-Barbera, just did as part of our jobs have had on people. Children naturally put it into perspective as best they can, like the young boy I once met who was from my wife Barbara's family, who after visiting us went rushing back to his school and proudly reported, "I met Fred Flintstone's daddy!" (Though if a paternity suit were to be filed, my DNA would be found much more prevalently in Scooby and the Family Doo.)

But most of the people who talk to me about my career are not children. More often than not, they are young artists or studio representatives to whom I have become something called "legendary." I actually hear that word used in reference to me and, frankly, I often wonder what they are talking about.

From the perspective of show business, which loves to pin labels on people, "legendary" is a term that fundamentally applies to anybody who has managed to hang around for over fifty years. Since I am still hanging around and coming into work every day at the Warner Bros. cartoon unit (which is not located on their main studio lot in Burbank, but is contained within a shopping mall, of all places, in nearby Sherman Oaks), I guess I'll have to bear up under the weight of the term.

Some of the young people who work up at the studio think of me in such terms simply because of the people I've met and worked with throughout my life, including some that could truly be considered legendary by any standards. These not only include animation legends such as Walt Disney and his key animators, who have come to be known collectively as "The Nine Old Men," and Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera, who revolutionized television animation, but figures outside of the animation industry, such as the jazz musi-

cians Kid Ory, Bunk Johnson, and Zooty Singleton. These younger artists are among those who have encouraged me to sit down and make a record of my life, my times, and the people I have met along the way (though had I known when I was a young artist that I was destined to someday be “legendary,” perhaps I would have taken notes). So in a sense, this book is for them.

Legend or not, here I come . . .

A KID OF THE CITY

There's a Japanese term that is difficult to translate into English: *shikata ga nai*. It is frequently spoken with a shrug of the shoulders or a hand gesture, and it can also go with a little sound made by sucking in a breath, like a *tsk*. Probably the closest to an actual translation would be somewhere in between, "So be it," and "Yeah, okay, cool." *Shikata ga nai* basically sums up the philosophy of accepting what comes, of adapting to the situation, of going with the flow. If I had to sum up my life so far, I would have to say that I have more often gone with the flow than fought against the current, but I am certainly not complaining. The flow I have ridden has been pretty good.

I am something of a rarity in Los Angeles: a native son. Most everyone else in L.A., certainly the vast majority of those with whom I've worked over the years, all came from somewhere else. Had I similarly come from some other part of the country, I'm not certain whether I would have ended up here on the coast, working in the film and television industries. What does seem certain is that, had I been born in Chicago or New York or Kansas City or anyplace else out of sight of the Pacific Ocean, I would not have had to spend my late teenage years inside Manzanar, since only the West Coast Japanese Americans were rounded up and interned. Ironically, even the Japanese families living in Hawaii, where Japan's attack on the United States occurred, were allowed to maintain their normal lifestyles.

Shikata ga nai.

My parents were *issei*; first-generation Japanese who settled in the United States. Both my father, Chitoshi Takamoto, and mother, Akino Sendo, were born in the fishing village of Hatsukaichi, which was located on the Inland Sea of Japan, on the main island (Akino, incidentally, is one of those rare Japanese names that are written entirely in Japanese alphabetical symbols instead of Chinese pictographic ones).

Since my father did very well in school—he was the head of his class, in fact—he was able to attend college, which was highly competitive in Japan at that time. It was so competitive that there were actually a number of suicides among college students who were unable to make the grade.

The curriculum apparently took quite a physical toll on many students, including Father. He was sent to the doctor for a physical, and the doctor recommended that he take a year off from school and that he get a job that would demand a high degree of physical labor. There was one readily available: working as a farm laborer with my grandfather, who had already come over to America.

Like many immigrants, my grandfather had come to take advantage of the standard of living that existed in the United States, but also like many Japanese (and unlike those of that era coming from European cultures), he had little desire to move his entire family over here on a permanent basis. His idea instead was to make as much money as he could and send it back to Japan to better the lives of his family back home. Father sized up the situation he was in and saw a two-birds-one-stone kind of solution, which was to come to the United States and make some money, and at the same time follow his doctor's orders. He came, he worked, he returned, and then he began a courtship with my mother and married her, after which the two of them made the move to America. They first landed in Seattle.

My mother fared better than some of the young women who came to the new country with her, who were taken advantage of and frequently harassed because they had never worn Western clothing before. This could have been because she was already married. I do, however, recall hearing about her unfamiliarity with the Western style of women's dress and having to figure out such matters as wearing a brassiere. One story my mother told us centered on the first bath she had taken in America. She was accustomed to washing herself and then splashing on some water and rinsing herself off, and climbing down into a traditional Japanese bath, which was a large tub that required a great deal of hot water to fill, and soaking only after she was thoroughly cleansed. But sitting down in the water while still dirty she found very puzzling. She said she remembered thinking that Americans were very strange people, because they bathed in their own dirt. She also worked as a farm laborer, which was the most common occupation for Japanese immigrants at that time, and she remembered how tiring and painful it was to stay stooped over all day picking strawberries, something she never had to do again once arriving in Los Angeles.

I was born at the dead center of the city of Los Angeles, within the bound-

aries of an area that is still called Little Tokyo, probably no more than a quarter of a mile from where our famous City Hall now stands. I actually arrived in L.A. a couple years before City Hall did, on April 29, 1925. My birth date held a special significance: it was also the birthday of Emperor Hirohito of Japan. When I was young I dreamed of taking advantage of that fact, wishing that I could travel to Japan on April 29 and then pretend that the massive national celebration was really for me.

Most of my early life was spent right in the downtown area. Because my father was a produce buyer for the Robert Fitzsimmons Markets, one of the major grocery store chains in the area, we always lived close to the large city markets in the south part of downtown. One of the bigger markets was located on Seventh Street and another one was at Ninth and San Pedro. Here the various farmers would come in with truckloads of their fresh vegetables and fruits and offer them up for sale. Having previously been a farm worker, Father was very knowledgeable about produce and, because of his position with the stores he would often be given samples for free, which he would bring home. While I would not realize it for years, this would color my appreciation of fruits and vegetables for the rest of my life. I became somewhat spoiled by the freshness of the produce we had when I was a boy. Years later, when I was living on my own and I went into the market to purchase fruit and vegetables, and I had no idea that they could be so awful!

I was to be the only child in the household for only a short time. My mother bore another child three years after I was born, a sister named Kimiko, then a son three years later, who died after only about a week of life. The last of the family was my brother Norito, who was born exactly three years later. Why they had us all three years apart—and how they managed to do it with such perfect timing—is something I never knew.

I do not recall much about the brother we lost, outside of the memory of the undertakers coming in to our house and carrying out this small box. I remember having an overwhelming sense of sadness upon being told what had happened, and I can also remember walking my sister Kimiko, then only three, out to the playground of the Ninth Street grammar school, which I was then attending, and just putting her on a swing and letting her swing. That was my way of riding out that sadness.

While I always think of my sister as Kimiko, she is also known as “Judy.” Both she and my brother Norito use Anglicized names; his is “Robert” or “Bob.” This is a fairly common practice among the *nisei*, the second-generation Japanese in America, the generation to which I belong. Perhaps the most visible example of this is the late actor Pat Morita, who in recent years had

gone back to his Japanese name, Noriyuki. I never took on an Anglicized name, even at the risk of seeing “Iwao” repeatedly mangled, mispronounced, and misspelled over the years. I have been credited on at least one production as “Iowa Takamoto,” which sounds like the Asian equivalent of Indiana Jones. For the record, the traditional pronunciation of my name is exactly as it looks phonetically, with the “I” pronounced as a long “E” (like *I Ching*) and with the remaining vowels given separate emphasis. Usually, however, I hear it as “Ee-woe,” a pronunciation to which I have become accustomed.

The reason I never traded it for an Anglo name goes back to my school days. Call it a sense of youthful rebelliousness, coupled with the attitude that seemed to run through a lot of us who came out of that quasi-ghetto section of the city (which today might be called a “hood”) wherein we suffered from a certain measure of personal uncertainty, even insecurity. It was the feeling that you needed something in your life to bolster your sense of confidence, and you latched onto it wherever you could. Mine came from the roll call in school. I used to love sitting in the classes at the beginning of each semester, while the teacher went down the list of students, calling out each name. The students, of course, would respond with “here” or “present.” I always knew when my teacher would get to my name even before hearing it, because there would be a sudden pause, followed by several more beats of silence while he or she was attempting to figure out how to pronounce it. Sometimes they would get it right and sometimes they would blow it, but either way, it made me feel momentarily superior. I knew something that even the teacher did not: how to effortlessly pronounce my name. That feeling of superiority did not last all that long, but it was always worth it. For that reason I never gave up the name Iwao for something like Chuck or Joe or Bill.

We spoke only Japanese in our home when I was a child. I don’t think I knew a word of English until I started kindergarten and then learned to speak it at school. This was a deliberate decision on the part of my parents. Like others of the issei, my mother and father had mastered a way of communicating in English, but it was a broken, accented form of the language that they refused to use in our home because they thought that, if English was going to be spoken, it was to be spoken properly. They wanted me to be able to speak English correctly, with the minimal amount of accent. There were two exceptions to this Japanese-only rule: we called my mother “Momma” and my father “Poppa.”

But beyond that I did have some bilingual training as a child. Starting in elementary school and extending through junior high school, I attended Japanese language school right after I got through with the regular school. A bus would pick me up and I’d go to this school, and after about a half hour of

free time, I would be called into class for another hour and then bussed back home. Unfortunately, I never took as much advantage of what I learned there, and today I regret that I did not take those classes more seriously. I wish now that I would have continued to use them on a regular basis, because if I had, I would at least be semi-literate in Japanese. As it stands, English is my primary language, and the point at which that happened is easy for me to pinpoint: when I began to dream in English, I knew that I had crossed over the language barrier.

One valuable byproduct of this school, which I was not to realize until years later, was that we were regularly made to practice oriental calligraphy in the process of learning the Chinese characters that the Japanese have borrowed. That, in a sense, was my formal art training. It taught me the value of the strength and character that exists in a single line, which is invaluable when applied to animation, and it also instilled in me an awareness of the concept of “negative space,” the spatial quality that exists around the visual things that you see. The job of effectively posing characters against a background for an animation scene is something that benefits greatly from an understanding of negative space.

I was always a good student in school, though by my definition, a good student is not necessarily one blessed with native brilliance. Rather it is the kid who knows how to get good grades. As long as you know which buttons to push to satisfy the teachers, you can be a good student. I was quite adept at that. In fact, I was skipped over several grades, which perennially made me a good two years younger than the rest of my classmates. While this was not beneficial to my social life in school (which was virtually nonexistent at the time), I was able to keep up with the academics, which was very important to my family, particularly to my father.

There is a certain kind of aloofness built into the relationship of the eldest son with the father. I would bring home my report cards, which usually contained all A's, and watch as Father looked at them. He would review them and then give me a satisfactory nod, then hand the report card back (understating the accomplishments of your children seems to be a cultural thing among the Japanese). Every now and then, though, he would suddenly stop looking at the card and move his gaze questioningly up to me, and I knew exactly what was coming.

“A B?” he would say, accusingly.

I would reply something like, “But it's in physical education.” It was not that I was particularly poor in phys ed, I was just a little bit small to make a great basketball player.

He would continue to stare at me for lowering my standards to allow in a

B, and then finally let me off the hook with a gesture of the head or an expression that indicated I had offered an adequate enough excuse. That's what the expectations were, and because of it I have since been accused of being a perfectionist. I truly don't think of myself that way, but I do believe that if you are going to do something, you should do it well. That philosophy certainly did not hurt years later when striving to satisfy the ever-demanding Walt Disney and the artists who worked directly under him.

Our neighborhood during my school years might have been considered tough, but I never remember it as being dangerous—at least not in the sense of danger through the risk of being attacked by someone else. Looking back on it, I can see plenty of danger, but it was all of our own making. Sometimes I wonder how a lot of us lived through childhood. For example, at the end of our block was a lumberyard, and on the weekends when it was closed we would all go down there and, essentially, break in. It was a wonderful place, and we would pretend that we were explorers making our way through some uncharted canyon.

This was also the era of the Red Cars. Any cartoon fans who are too young to have experienced the rail cars that served as L.A.'s primary mass-transit system during the first half of the twentieth century can catch up to speed by watching *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, in which the Red Cars are a major plot element. These big, clanging, bright scarlet rail cars criss-crossed the entire city, with the tracks often laid right into the pavement of the streets. That included the street right next to Ninth Street School. My friends and I would find duplex nails lying around—the kind that have a shaft and a second ring below the head, which looks something like a hilt—and we would wait for the next Red Car to appear. When we spotted it coming down the block, we would run into the street and lay these nails down on the tracks so that the cars would run over them. The results of these smashed-flat nails would be miniature swords, which we would display in our rooms. We never used them for weapons, because we didn't have to. We were risking our lives enough just running into the street in front of a Red Car, but that was part of the fun of it.

We would occasionally see examples of the neighborhood's dangerous side that were not of our own making. There were gangs that lived around the area, and you might spot an older kid standing out on a street corner smoking . . . and not always tobacco. One time a group of us were walking by a pool hall and it was hard not to notice that a fight was going on inside. One man had his arm loaded up with pool balls, which he was throwing at another man with as much force as he could manage. The other fellow, meanwhile,

was dodging the balls and ducking behind whatever furniture was handy. Finally the attacker ran out of pool balls, and his agile opponent shouted, "Now you're out of ammunition!" He promptly grabbed a cue stick and swung it, the heavy, weighted end out, toward the first guy, who naturally threw up his arm to protect himself. All of us could hear the snap of his arm as it broke when the stick hit him. We were all street kids who had a pretty good idea how to fend for ourselves, but even so, we decided it was time to get the hell out of there.

By the time I was approaching teenage, I had discovered the world of books. I loved to read. When my parents signed off on a library card, I started spending a lot of my time in the library. The only library I was aware of was the Central Library located downtown. At that time I didn't realize what an interesting building that was: a masterpiece of art deco design with a pyramidal tower rising from its center, and inside dozens of sculptures and something like nine thousand square feet of murals. I was then only interested in the books. I would walk up to Fifth and Hope, which was about two miles away from our home, check out a few books, and head back home.

Traveling back and forth like that, I would always make it a point to go through Skid Row, the western boundary of which was only a few blocks away, on Main Street. I loved to stop and talk to some of the homeless men that were there, who back then were called hoboes instead of winos or bums (of course some of them *were* winos and alcoholics; they had to have something to ease their existence). The stories they told were fascinating, and some of them might even have been true. But whether they were real, or comprised of half-truths, or totally fabricated for the benefit of an audience of one young boy, they were all entertaining stories. Usually they concerned these fellows' early lives and their oddball experiences as they rode the trains around the country. Of course this was during the Great Depression, which all of us everywhere were still struggling through.

I don't think I ever bothered to tell my parents I was doing this, but I never felt I had to. Back then none of us ever considered it a risky endeavor to walk up to some poor guy on the street and strike up a conversation. There was very little organization in terms of what we kids did outside of school itself. As a part of our household tradition, we were required to maintain certain cultural formalities, such as announcing when we were about to begin eating a meal, or stating after the meal was finished that the food was good. We were also expected to announce in semiformal fashion our comings and goings from the house, just to give our parents some idea as to where we were. But whatever we did once we left home was of far less concern. We were told,

“Just go outside and play,” and once having left the house, we were on our own. I don’t think this was a bad thing, because kids of that period had to find ways of doing things for themselves, which meant that for the most part, they developed into very responsible and individualized people.

One year a kid from my gang of friends, whose parents were relatively affluent, at least by the standards of the rest of us, decided that the only thing he wanted for Christmas was a stopwatch. He was used to getting fairly expensive gifts for his birthday and on holidays, but for some reason, nothing would satisfy him this time except a real, professional stopwatch, the kind used by coaches and judges at Olympic track events. Naturally, his parents got him one, and he came around to show it off to all of us. Right around that time, I had been developing a real interest in athletics, such as track and field, and in spectator sports like baseball. I was one of those kids who was fascinated by the batting averages and other stats in baseball. So I grabbed the stopwatch and said, “This is something you can really use in sports”—which is exactly what we did.

We lived on a very long city block on Tenth Street, right off Central Avenue, which we paced off and discovered that it was almost exactly a quarter-mile long. We then paced that distance off in yards and set distance markers with whatever was available: a tree, a lamppost, or whatever was there. At the end of the block was an empty apartment, which we “borrowed” in the name of athletics, and inside it we set up a blackboard and made a chart logging each of these marked distances. We used our friend’s stopwatch and timed one another as we ran these distances, and we recorded our scores on the blackboard in this empty apartment.

Given our success at foot racing with a borrowed gift, it’s a shame our affluent buddy never asked for a horse.

At some point in my schooling years, I began to express myself through drawing. It was not a great realization that I had artistic ability, either on my part or that of anyone else, it just started to happen. At first I was simply doing what every other kid did who had access to a flat surface and something that would make a mark, and I did not think much more about it. I was, however, constantly being selected in school to draw illustrations for assemblies they would have in the auditorium. In those days they put slides up on a screen, and maybe a little background, but they might ask for a drawing of a cowboy on a horse, or a bucking bronco, things like that. I began to enjoy drawing, and while my abilities were not exactly fawned over, either at home or in school, this was the beginning of being recognized as having enough

ability to create something that was not too embarrassing to put up on a screen.

By then I was already habitually looking at the illustrations in children's books and trying to emulate what I saw there, and eventually I discovered that, having examined the intricacies of these pictures and illustrations, I could later draw them from memory when the books were no longer in front of me. This ability to draw from memory is perhaps the only facet of drawing that rises above what every other kid was able to do; that and the habit of creating a personal interpretation of the original drawing, rather than simply making a duplication of it. I had been doing that since about the age of five, though it never occurred to me when I was young that this ability was something that had a professional application.

It did, however, have an academic application. One time in junior high school we were studying European history during the Dark Ages, the time of the Crusades, and the teacher suddenly decided that, at the end of the year, we would do a major report about something that happened in that era—almost like a master's thesis. Going back to my definition of a good student, I began thinking of how I could impress the teacher enough to get a good grade, so I could keep my father happy. The idea of writing a massive report was not that appealing, so I decided to use another tack: I created a comic strip about the Third Crusade, and of course, it got me my A and the approving nod of my father.

What's more, while I had no idea of this at the time, I had just created my first storyboard.

Today, given the phenomenon of urban sprawl, the tangled grid of streets and freeways, and the car culture of Los Angeles, which means that anybody can travel dozens of miles on any given day as a matter of course, it might seem strange that a youngster could be born in a certain area and never stray very far from that spot until the encroachment of adulthood. But that was the way it was. Occasionally I would wander into south-central Los Angeles, which was not that far away, and would feel comfortable doing so because that whole area seemed so insulated. The one notable exception occurred in 1938 when I was thirteen years old.

I was already in high school because I had tested into higher grades (though I was the youngest one in my class). My father strongly believed that my siblings and I should have a chance to visit our country of heritage, meet our grandparents—whom we kids had not met—and find out where he and our mother had come from. So Kimiko, Norito, and I were pulled out of school

to travel with my mother to Japan, while my father stayed home to tend to business.

This was the first time Mother had been back to her homeland since coming to the United States. The war, obviously, had not yet started but there was already trouble on the horizon in Europe, though it did not result in any travel restrictions to and from Japan. There were three ships at that time that crossed the Pacific by way of the NYK Line out of Japan, the *Asahi Maru*, the *Tatsuta Maru*, and the *Chichibu Maru*, each of which was named after a member of the Imperial Family. We stayed in third class, which for me offered no discomfort. It was almost like living in a communal type of space where the men all bunked together, and where everyone ate in a big dining hall. The cuisine was all Japanese, which was fine with me.

I was to meet some interesting people on the trip. The passenger list was largely Asian, and if there were any Anglos they were in first class, and the classes, of course, did not mix on ships in those days. The only contact I had with Westerners on board involved two Russian men who a year or two earlier had accompanied a Japanese sailor who had crossed the Pacific in a junk, to quite a bit of acclaim. These two huge (or at least they seemed so) fellows were on their way back to Russia, via Japan, and they took a liking to me. We would get together and hang out, managing somehow to communicate in a strange mix of English and sign language.

The entire voyage took about two weeks, and we had a stop over in Hawaii to refuel and take on supplies. For us, this was an opportunity to drop in on my mother's older sister and her husband who had a house in Honolulu. I believe we only had a day's layover on the island, but it was enough time to allow me to try my hand at climbing the coconut tree in my aunt's back yard and pulling down a coconut. It was not a very tall tree, which meant I was able to accomplish the feat of shinnying up the trunk without falling and breaking my neck. I retrieved my prize, though once I had the coconut—which looked nothing like the trimmed and cleaned coconuts I had seen in the markets—I didn't have the slightest idea of what to do with it. It remained in Honolulu after we reembarked the ship.

Once we had arrived in Japan, we made our way to the home of my father's family. My grandfather was at that time quite ill, but we stayed with him for about three months. Since we remained primarily within the village, we were not able to get much of a sense of the larger cities. In fact, my primary memory of Tokyo was an incident that happened in the train depot. My attention was caught by a girlish conversation, and I looked around to see who was speaking. There were several extremely tall young women in tradi-

tional garb—kimonos tied with the obi sash—and they were talking among themselves. I thought they must also have enormously high wooden clogs, given their height. I began wandering around them in a circle, trying to get a clearer look, and it turned out that they were Caucasian, and yet totally Japanese in the way they talked, their physical stance, even their hand gestures. At last I asked someone about the women and learned that they were White Russians, the offspring of some family who had fled Russia during the Communist revolution, and had ended up in Japan.

Even though we stayed in Hatsukaichi, which could be called a rural village, I was able to get a feel for Japan, particularly its high degree of nationalism, which existed everywhere. It was even in the schools, which were conducted in something of a regimented fashion, practically leaning in the direction of military schools. The students all wore uniforms and were sent out onto the playground first thing in the morning to go through a regimen of calisthenics. It was the sort of thing that you later saw in films chronicling life in the Soviet Union. After witnessing this, getting glares from my father in return for receiving a questionable grade did not seem so bad.

Because of the duration of this trip, I enrolled in school in Japan and remained a student there for about two months. In contrast to my school back in Los Angeles, where I was younger than most of my classmates, here I was a little older. Also, back home I was about the same height as everyone in my class, but in Japan I was taller than everyone else. This did not help me particularly in trying to keep up with my new classmates in their morning calisthenics activities, which involved running a mile or so through the countryside and up in the mountains and the hills by the school. I could outrun them as far as speed was concerned, but they would keep running and running and running past the point where I was ready to pass out. In retrospect, it is not difficult to see how this rigorous physical training combined with the imposed nationalism and veneration of the Emperor, and near indoctrination into the way of Shinto, was the beginning of the Japanese army that fought so fiercely during World War II. It's amazing what can be done in a single generation.

One place I did stand out in this new school environment was in drawing Americanized cartoons in the classroom. I may have been a klutz when it came to keeping up with them on the runs, but the other kids were fascinated by the things that I drew.

Hatsukaichi had a small seaport, not quite a dock, but a tiny harbor where a rock wall had been built up at the land's edge to hold back the land and accommodate the tides. Here small ships that were laden with yams could come

in to port, as it were, and be unloaded. The yams would be used to make a kind of liquor called *shochu*. I was fascinated by the way these ships were unloaded: they would put a plank from these ships across to the dock structures and men with traditional wooden yokes balanced on their shoulders would load up the baskets at each end of the yokes until they were nearly overflowing with yams and then lug them off the boat and onto shore. These would then be carted off to the factory that made the *shochu*.

The biggest benefit of having a liquor factory near my grandparents' house had nothing to do with the alcohol itself. A byproduct of making *shochu* was the release of a large amount of boiling water, which the factory would expel through a pipe on the side of the building. It was perfectly clean water and we found a way to use it. My grandparents had the kind of traditional bathtub that requires a large amount of hot water—the kind my mother had been used to before she was forced to make the transition to American-style bathing. My grandmother would build a fire underneath it to heat the water, but I found I was able to get a running start for our baths by going down to the *shochu* factory with a huge bucket, which I rolled along in a wagon, collect the boiling water that was spilling out, take it back and pour it into the bathtub.

The other vivid memory of this trip was the house next to that of my grandparents. At nights, while I was falling asleep, I would hear the sound of stringed instruments playing, followed by a lot of laughter and giggling, all coming from the place—which turned out to be a Geisha house. I got to know the kids from the family who owned the house, even though I never set foot in it. Beyond that, I just was not terribly interested in investigating it. Back in our neighborhood in Los Angeles, we also had a few nearby houses that were being used for disreputable activities, one of them across the street from us, and as kids we would run up and try to peek through the windows to see what was going on. At that point in my life, I don't think I cared about the Geisha.

The trip to Japan meant that I had fallen about a half year behind in school in Los Angeles. But despite that, because I had been moved up in grades, I was still younger than most of my classmates. As I approached my senior year at Thomas Jefferson High, I was beginning to care about what I was going to do after my graduation, despite the fact that I was only sixteen. I was appraising what the viable job opportunities might be for an Asian, and hoping to avoid the fate as a young man who lived on our street, with whom I occasionally played touch football. He was in his early twenties and a graduate of Cal Tech, but despite his degree he was working down at the markets as a swamper, which is somebody who carts produce back and forth from the farm trucks.

Given the way things were at that point in time, that was the best he could do for employment.

What was the best that I could do? I was not sure. I had no specific ambition, and my attempts at career planning did not extend very far. I thought that perhaps I might be accepted in some sort of minor-level medical profession: a pharmacologist, or perhaps even a dentist. If I were lucky, I might be able to obtain a civil service job. The truth is I found myself taking on something of the Scarlet O'Hara attitude: tomorrow is another day. I would see what happened then.

Shikata ga nai.

As it turned out, I never had to confront the problem directly, because not very many tomorrows later—December 7, 1941—would prove to be anything but just another day.

A JAPANESE AMERICAN IN THE TIME OF WAR

I cannot recall having any strong opinion one way or the other regarding the attack on the United States from Japan. That may sound surprising given the significance of the events at Pearl Harbor, but the results of these events had yet to happen. On December 8, 1941, when I and the rest of the world had just learned of the attack, it simply seemed unreal.

The truth is, for a good part of my life, particularly my youth, I have always seemed to be a few years behind where I possibly should have been in terms of awareness. In my own defense, I was not in a situation nor setting that demanded keeping abreast of everything that my peers were doing, since my peer groups were split. In high school, because of my grades (and my father's effect on them), I was surrounded by classmates who were one, sometimes two years older than I was, who were all doing their own thing while I was still hanging around with the "little kids" who were actually my age. I was a creature of my neighborhood, rarely, if ever, venturing out of a two-mile-or-so square area, managing to live in one of the largest and most populous cities in America and still grow up in a kind of village atmosphere. I've known New Yorkers who grew up in neighborhoods that were so insulated, either culturally or racially, that New Jersey seemed like a foreign country.

The point is that none of us kids at the time really had a deep feeling or reaction about what the attack on Pearl Harbor meant—or how devastating a thing it was for all of us and for the United States. It simply did not strike me at the time as being as intensely traumatic as it must have been to many of the nisei, who were no more than a couple years older than I was.

News of the attack arrived while a group of us were playing sandlot football early one morning. Some of us had been driven to the park by the older kids who coached us, and who had cars. Suddenly over a car radio came an an-

nouncer's voice telling us that Japanese planes had bombed the naval base in Pearl Harbor. We looked at one another and shrugged and said, "That's terrible," or some other expression of shock or condolence of the kind that one repeats when attending a funeral service. Even though I had been to Pearl Harbor once before, on a one-day stopover on that trip I had taken to Japan with my mother and siblings, the news was not something for which I had complete comprehension. We were in a state in denial. It took quite a bit of time for the seriousness of it to settle into our consciousness, and even then it was hard to grasp.

But it did not take long for the concept of "Them" and "Us," which is so necessary to prosecute a war of any kind, to register. The question was: which was I? Even though my family had come from Japan, my grandparents still lived there, and I had actually visited them, I never particularly identified with the people of Japan. I don't think I was alone in this attitude. Some time before the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt had commissioned a study to be made of the loyalty of the Japanese living in the United States. The so-called Munson Report (named after the State Department representative who had conducted the investigation, Curtis Munson) demonstrated pretty conclusively that there were no feelings of disloyalty or rising tides of sedition among Japanese Americans. But suddenly the Japanese had become the enemy, like the Germans and Italians; they were the "bad guys." But since the issei and nisei were still categorizations of Americans, and Americans were the "good guys," we must be on the side of right. Unfortunately, it was not quite that simple.

I believe my parents' generation was much more conscious of the situation and extremely, deeply worried about what was going to happen to all of us. But they remained fundamentally stoic about the whole thing, which is a Japanese trait. The real trouble, though, would result from identification through physical traits.

Many people in this country after Pearl Harbor were angry and wanted to lash out at the nation that had attacked them. We were not, in December 1941, at war with Germany, not yet. But even if we had been, a native-born German or a German American could have walked down the street of any city in America and gone unnoticed. The same was largely true with Italians and Italian Americans, with whose country we were likewise not yet at war. The countrymen of Hitler and Mussolini could have been sitting on every bus, in every classroom, in every office or board room or political gathering in the United States, and unless they opened their mouths, those in America

worried about foreign threats would not have noticed. Japanese, on the other hand, stood out. Whether one is a native of Japan, the issei or a nisei, your heritage and nationality was on your face.

I cannot recall problems with any of the other kids after the attack, again, in part I believe because of the insulated area in which we were all living. Whether anyone was Asian or Black or Hispanic, it was still the same people you were used to seeing. But adults could be different. Occasionally if we ran into a grown up who was an Occidental we would get a little backlash expressed to us; not very often, certainly not every day, or even on a regular basis, but once in a while a little epithet would be hurled at us. Since we were kids we were easy targets, whereas an adult might have fought back. I think there were as many Chinese students who got punched around as Japanese students, because most people were unable to distinguish which was which. Some of the Chinese students finally found a method of protection by walking around wearing tags that read: *I am Chinese*.

Once the enormity of the attack on Pearl Harbor sunk in, it took only a few months for the U.S. Government to move and begin rounding up every Japanese man, woman, and child living on the West Coast and transporting us into what they called relocation camps.

These days, when controversy erupts over the government's detention of terror suspects, it might be hard for some people to imagine how Washington could simply gather up a race of people and put them away for a few years and get away with it. The hysteria of the time certainly had a lot to do with it. Many of the country's leading political figures helped to feed the hysteria. Then-secretary-of-state Cordell Hull and the secretary of war, Henry Stimson, both advocated some kind of roundup and seclusion of Japanese in the United States. Among the more vocal supporters for this was Earl Warren, the future chief justice of the Supreme Court, who was then attorney general of California. Even Hollywood got into the act: Leo Carillo, who was a popular movie actor of the time and who ultimately had a stretch of beach in Santa Monica named in his honor, led the campaign to intern Japanese for the "safety" of the people of California. Outdoing just about everyone in terms of spreading fear and hatred, however, was a United States congressman from Mississippi named John Rankin, who stood before the House of Representatives and declared: "This is a race war . . . let's get rid of them [the Japanese] now!"

Whether through political considerations or fear itself, President Roosevelt decided to ignore the Munson Report and signed into law Executive Order 9066 in February 1942, which gave the War Department the authority

to declare certain parts of the country as strategic military areas and eliminate from them any “enemy aliens.” I don’t think the order specified Japanese in so many words, but it didn’t have to.

One reason that was repeated quite frequently for this drastic action was that the Japanese living on the coast had to be evacuated and interned because so many of them were not American citizens, but rather still citizens of Japan. My parents fell into that category of resident. But what tended to go unspoken is that there was a good reason for that: the issei were not allowed to become naturalized citizens. That law, called the Naturalization Act, stated that only white immigrants could become citizens. It was enacted in 1790, a time when the ink on the United States Constitution was barely dry, and was upheld in a Supreme Court case in 1922. In addition, another law from the 1920s called the Alien Land Law further stated that aliens who were not eligible for citizenship could not own land. Previously, Asians had gotten around this by buying land under the names of their children, who were citizens by nature of their birth in the United States. In fact, many Japanese farmers in California had become quite successful in this manner. But the Alien Land Law sought to put a stop to that, and in 1943 Earl Warren, who had by then become governor of California, signed another bill that strengthened the original law.

The conclusion I have reached from reading this part of history is that the upholding of the Naturalization Act was specifically aimed toward making Japanese in America ineligible to own land. It is not a secret that many white farmers and landowners hated the idea of Asians controlling and working so much land in California. That’s the reason nearly all of the wartime internees were still Japanese nationals. It’s almost as if they were set up for this treatment.

By March 1942 the government was already talking about moving people out of Japanese neighborhoods, such as the large fishing community on California’s Terminal Island, and hauling them off into makeshift “assembly centers.” Terminal Island was probably the first target because it was such a racially concentrated area. Along with some friends, I drove down there to find out what was happening. We were just a bunch of teenagers who could not have offered any help in the situation one way or the other, but we wanted to see first hand if the stories of forced eviction that we had heard were true.

They were.

The families that were being evacuated were allowed to take only what they were able to carry with them, some clothes, maybe a few possessions, if they were small, but nothing else. Nothing, certainly, in the way of furniture

and housewares. It was as though the residents were being forced to run out of a burning building, grabbing whatever they could on the way out the door. I was totally aghast at the sight of outsiders tramping through the community and going into these houses from which the residents were being moved out, and pointing at a refrigerator and saying, "I'll give you three dollars for that." They were taking advantage of a horrible situation and offering a few bucks here and there for good and personal items that were worth much, much more. To my mind they were nothing but scavengers. It was my first experience at seeing how lousy human beings could be, given the opportunity.

We returned to our neighborhood to wait. We did not have to wait long. By the beginning of April the posters began to appear telling us when we had to leave our homes and where we had to go. These would be put up throughout the neighborhood detailing how the evacuation would be handled street by street, block by block. It is hard to describe the effect these posters had on us. A few years ago, long after the war had ended, my wife, Barbara, and I had occasion to go down to Little Toyko in Los Angeles, to attend a Japanese cultural festival. One of those evacuation signs was being displayed in a window. I suggested that Barbara go over and read it, and she did. I will never forget the expression on her face when she returned; it was a cross between total mystification and sudden realization. She said: "That poster was signed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, but reading it, I expected the signature to read 'Adolf Hitler.'" That was the way all of them read.

Such forced evacuations affected every Japanese family in the Pacific coast states, Washington, Oregon, California, and Alaska. The sweep also included those in many Latin American countries. The purported rationale was that the government feared there might be Japanese spy cells in these states that could work toward facilitating a direct attack on the West Coast, but growing public hysteria after Pearl Harbor was also a large contributor to the decision. The entire Japanese community was experiencing its own outbreak of hysteria, of a sort, after seeing what was happening in places like Terminal Island and in farming communities along the coast.

Japanese people living in states other than Washington, Oregon and California were allowed to go about their daily lives. It was possible, of course, to leave the Western states for another unaffected state, and some families did that, packing up and moving and, if they had close Caucasian friends, asking them to keep an eye on their properties for them until they could return.

Our turn came quickly. I managed to take our evacuation in stride and left the worrying to my parents. Even before I fully understood the concept

of Zen, I think I was exhibiting a Zen-like attitude toward life. Among the items we were forced to leave behind, there is one I remember most vividly. My mother had a collection of the miniature dolls depicting the feudal lord and his court and warriors that would be set up on a stair-like stand with the Lord on the top step and his minions below him. There were two different sets of them, one of which would be put out on what was called “Girl’s Day,” March 3, and the other on “Boy’s Day,” May 5th (Boy’s Day also encompassed “Children’s Day,” and the festivities included flying huge paper fish flags called *koinobori*). These were wonderful little figures, so delicately detailed. Despite their tiny size, you were still able to pull the swords out of the warriors’ sheaths and fit the arrows onto the bow strings. But she had to get rid of both sets because at the time the FBI was using almost anything they found in the houses of the Japanese families against them in order to turn them in or even jail them. This was particularly true of people who had been active in social organizations, or people from the same prefecture in Japan who might hold an annual picnic or reunion.

Any form of organization and gathering among Japanese people in 1942 was suspect. Even things like flashlights were confiscated from homes, presumably because a flashlight might be used to signal a plane from the ground. If you happened to be a devotee of shortwave radio, you were also placed under suspicion.

Once we had packed we were loaded on to busses to be taken to the camp. In one sense we were lucky—if you can call it that—because our family was kept intact. My father, mother, brother, sister, and I remained together. That was not the case with all families, where the father might be hauled off separately. We also managed to avoid being sent to what the government called an assembly center, a temporary place into which a large segment of the Japanese population was first loaded into while the internment camps where they would end up were being completed. These assembly centers were set up primarily in horse race tracks—Santa Anita Park outside Los Angeles was the major one—and based on the experiences I have heard and read from others, they were not pleasant. People were placed in the horse stalls, which still carried the smell of stables.

In recent years I have traveled around the country lecturing to groups about my career, which also encompassed the time in the camp, and one time in Portland, Oregon, I was exposed to the experiences of other internees. I was deeply affected by the writings of these people, describing their recollections, because of the simplicity and directness of their words. It was more a

form of poetry than prose. Hearing such stories from others who were forced into the assembly centers is why I now feel that my family was among the more fortunate ones.

That perspective, however, was years into the future, long after the experience of internment was over. When we arrived at the camp after a long bus ride, clutching what remained of our belongings, and I first saw the barbed-wire fences and towers holding armed guards, what impressed me was the prison atmosphere of the place called Manzanar.

With only the clothes on our backs and whatever we could stuff into a suitcase on short notice, my family and I prepared as best we could to take up residence in the place that would end up being our “home” for almost four years.

MANZANAR

There's an old saying that goes something to the effect of, you make your own bed, you have to lie in it. Its meaning is, whatever you've done with your life or situation, you have to live with it, because you created it. Those of us being bussed into Manzanar, or any of the other Japanese camps located between California and Arkansas had not done anything to create our present situation . . . but we did have to make our own beds—literally.

Immediately upon arrival at the camp we were handed a bag-like mat made of canvas and led to a pile of straw. We were told to take handfuls of straw and stuff them into the bag. These would be our mattresses.

Manzanar had not yet been completed when we arrived, which made it look even bleaker. It was one mile square and laid out on a grade, which leads up to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. There were a series of housing blocks, each one consisting of two rows of barracks. We were in block 10. In the center of the block was a large empty area where stood a laundry room, latrines, common showers, and a recreation complex. There was another small shack that we called the ironing room. And that was about all we had.

The barracks inside the blocks were divided into quarters and each family occupied one quarter, all separated by the thinnest walls imaginable. Usually the families would string up a series of cords and then hang sheets or blankets over them which would serve as curtains for a degree of privacy—it was almost like being in a hospital ward. At the top of each block was a double barrack that served as a mess hall.

Today it is not difficult to find photographic records of life at Manzanar. But there are several aspects of the camp that these pictures fail to convey. One was the wind, which was constant. The ground in the camp had not yet had the chance to become packed down and hard, certainly not as hard as it would become from subsequent years of people stomping around back and

forth and periodic wettings from a water hose. Because of this softness, the constantly blowing wind on the ground was to raise a perpetual cloud of dust throughout the camp. When the wind really kicked up you could not even see the barracks next to yours, and most of our days were spent sweeping out and dusting our living quarters. Even with all of that effort, we were lying around in sand all the time.

In addition to sweeping and cleaning things out, our tasks included obtaining heating oil in the one-gallon cans that were dispensed for the purpose and making sure that the oil-burning stove kept going. These took up so much of my attention that it took a while for me to begin to digest the sort of place we were in. Officially, it was called a war relocation camp or an internment camp. But looking around at the barbed wire and the guard tower, and then realizing that there were guns set up there, brought only one image to mind: that of a *concentration camp*. I'm sure a lot of Americans would not like to admit it, even today, but our government was operating concentration camps for a select group of United States citizens. This business of calling them "war relocation camps" or some other softened name was, frankly, bullshit. They were concentration camps.

As bleak as the picture looked upon arrival, it actually became less bleak with time. This was due in large part to the issei, who, among other things, began to landscape the bare areas, particular the patch of emptiness around the mess hall, where we had to line up day after day for our meals. As the months went by I watched the contouring of the space that separated the mess hall from the next barracks beginning to take shape. All of a sudden there might be a new tree planted there, and little by little, in front of our eyes, a beautiful Japanese garden was taking shape. Some of the men had apparently gotten permits to take a truck out into the desert nearby and hunt for granite rocks, which they would haul back and set up for the garden. Before the year was out, such gardens were popping up in every block, and it became rather competitive.

The gardens were just one example of how the issei at Manzanar simply got on with life and worked hard to make things better for everyone. The first immigrant generation, who had never been allowed to be naturalized because of the laws that existed back then, tended to toe the line, no matter what the line was. Still, I never got the sense that it was total resignation or surrender: it was more of a matter of making do. They directed considerable energy toward improving the life that was possible to have within the confines of this internment and making the best of it. I'll never lose that feeling of admiration for these people who held that attitude.

Shikata ga nai.

Such an outlook prevented them from going nuts in confinement and becoming extremely militant in protesting the internment—at least most of them. While no one has ever turned up evidence that there actually were saboteurs or anyone else representing a serious threat to America rounded up and interned, not every internee viewed their predicament with a desire to make the best of a bad situation. There were those who were militantly angry about the situation, though most of these people ended up being transported to the camp at Tule Lake, in northern California, where the security was much tighter.

If you could compare the internment camps to prisons, Tule Lake would have been the equivalent of a maximum security one. It was there that the *kibei*—those who had been sent to Japan when they were children and educated over there before returning to the United States—were housed. Because of their time in Japan, the *kibei* were considered a greater danger. Anyone from any of the other camps who had some shadow of suspicion for whatever reason was also sent there.

There is an extremely illustrative story of the time that demonstrates the conflict that was going on in the minds and hearts of many of the Japanese on the West Coast. A group of internees from Tule Lake had been judged to be above suspicion, and so they were being transferred to other camps that had looser security. All of these people were on one train heading out. At the same time there was another train filled with internees being sent to Tule Lake, because they were deemed to be greater risks. They were heading in. At one point the trains passed each other and the people on the train leaving Tule leaned out of the windows and hollered at those being transported in: “Go back to Japan, you damn Japs!”

It was sad, but we couldn’t help but be struck by the irony of these reports.

The most serious example of tension and conflict from within Manzanar itself was an incident that was thrust onto front pages of newspapers all over the country, the so-called camp riot. I don’t think of it in such terms, but others, including some who were also at Manzanar when it happened, have written about it as such. Here is the story from my recollection and perspective.

In its first eight months of existence, Manzanar had four successive leaders; call them “project directors” or “commandants,” it makes little difference. They were the ones in charge. One of them, whose name I can no longer recall, had been stealing the food that was slated to go to the camp—the same type of scarce foodstuffs that the U.S. Government was sending to the army,

things like sugar and meat—and was selling it and pocketing the profits. It was a form of graft on his part, pure and simple, and some of the adults at the camp had found out about it. Since there is a limit even to *shikata ga nai*, they decided to confront him.

It is probable that there were other grievances that helped to provoke this action. The fact that it took place on December 6, 1942, nearly one year to the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, might be construed to imply that there had been some kind of premeditation to it, like waiting for an anniversary date to send some kind of message, but I do not believe there was. I think the timing was simply a coincidence. I have also read other accounts that claim that the arrest and transport out of Manzanar of a Japanese cook who had accused the camp director of plundering the foodstuffs was the match that lit the fuse. But rising anger over the actual theft of the food was the reason that I recall.

A group of us were outside playing ball and we saw an assembly of adults marching down toward the administration building area. Whether they were planning to simply protest the theft of the foodstuffs or put up a more formal demonstration I don't know, but my friends and I thought it best not to follow the crowd down. The camp director already knew that trouble was brewing, and he ordered the setting up of sandbags and the presence of armed guards by the administration building. All the while, the crowd was growing. Over the years I have spoken with several people who were in the midst of that crowd and they all say that the army personnel behind the sandbags largely consisted of kids probably in their late teens, most likely newly drafted and probably from the Midwest, or some other place that did not have large Asian populations. In fact, most of these armed youngsters had probably never seen a Japanese before except in political cartoons or movie caricatures that tended to demonize the entire race. Now they were being confronted by a mob of Japanese, and it must have looked as though all of those cartoons were suddenly advancing in front of them. I have been told that they were so frightened their noses were visibly running. Finally one poor, nervous, inexperienced soldier squeezed the trigger, and then it started.

At the sound of gunfire, the crowd turned and ran, though the shooting continued long enough for one man to die on the spot and ten others to sustain hits to the back. One of them died five days later. Many more of them got tear gassed, including my father, who had joined the group of men. I rushed back to our barracks after this "riot" was over, and he had just come in, holding a handkerchief over his face, tears streaming down his cheeks from the tear gas.

The press had a field day. The *Los Angeles Times* published a ridiculous spin on the story, making it sound like a heroic, patriotic young Boy Scout soldier saved the entire country from a dangerous mob of marauding “foreigners” by protecting the American flag.

Not all of the people who were injured during the “riot” recovered immediately. About a year afterward I required an operation for a double hernia. In those days, for such an affliction you had to spend two weeks in the hospital flat on your back. In the hospital bed next to me was one of the men who had been hit by a bullet, and they were still treating his wound. I could hear him moaning in pain while they attended to him.

The only positive thing that resulted from the incident was that the director in question was retired and replaced by a man named Ralph P. Merrit, who remained director of the camp for the duration. It was Merrit who invited photographer Ansel Adams over to record some of the camp material, and what most people today know about Manzanar probably comes from having seen these photographs. Adams’s photos were impressive studies of the camp, capturing for posterity many moments in the lives of the internees, from a largely objective point of view.

There was another good photographer there named Toyo Miyatake, who specialized in portraiture and had his own photographic business for years. Toyo’s studies were just as impressive as Adams’s, but they were from a more personal perspective since he was an internee himself. Toyo took a series of shots that show three kids peering through barbed wire, looking into the camera. One of those kids was my brother, who was only about six or seven at the time.

Toyo Miyatake was a fun individual. He had previously studied in Paris, and he reminded me of the actor Sessue Hayakawa, who was something of a matinee idol back in the 1920s in France and also a big star over here during the silent era. Miyatake had the same kind of personal flair as Hayakawa: he wore a beret and every time he talked about Paris, he would call it “Paree,” which was the first time I had ever heard anyone say it with that affectation.

Very gradually things began to loosen up at the camps, at least those other than Tule Lake. In addition to the Japanese gardens, the issei began to plant what were elsewhere in America called “Victory gardens”—homegrown vegetable gardens that reduced the public demand on produce, which could then be utilized for the war effort. These gardens were planted in the fire breaks between blocks, and the adults (which is how I thought of them from my teen-aged perspective) found a way of irrigating the crops. Each family also had a garden right outside their doorway. Tomatoes were a favorite crop because

they were easy to grow, and I quickly discovered that one of the great taste sensations is to walk out in the morning, pluck a tomato covered with dew that would be ice cold, and take a bite into it. I've never had tomatoes that good since.

Corn was also a popular crop in the Victory gardens, and outside of their food value, the corn crops had another benefit for us kids at Manzanar: we used them to play a game after dark called "Commando," in which we would run around and hide in the tall stalks. We played this game well into the night, despite a nine o'clock curfew that had been imposed on the camp.

In general we did our best to have fun when we could. Even during that time I was in the infirmary, a group of us found a way to entertain ourselves: they would put us in wheelchairs to move us around, and we would talk the nurses into letting us race up and down the aisles. The doctors were not too pleased, but we had fun.

For the most part, our time was our own at Manzanar. The only things that were regulated time-wise were breakfast, lunch, and dinner, which were limited to a certain number of hours. At the beginning of our camp experience, the food was pitiful, though over time the cooks improved and we began to get some traditional ingredients, even such simple things as soy sauce. However, I found the experience of eating rice from a plate using a fork, rather than from a bowl with chopsticks, to be a strange and awkward one.

There was a school structure within the camp, and I was relishing getting back into it. But I wanted to be in the eleventh grade with fellow students who were my age. I did not want to get into the twelfth grade, which was the level I had been at on the outside. In fact, I had already gone through the requirements I needed for graduation and I already had a diploma, and I had a gold pin from the California Scholarship Federation for maintaining an all-A grade-point average. But I had missed out on most of the social aspects of being a student, such as attending a prom or an actual graduation ceremony. These were the experiences I wanted more than the class work. But because I had already achieved all of my pre-college requirements, they would not let me into either eleventh or twelfth grade. The people in charge of schooling said, "Oh, you're qualified for college. Think about going to college, and in the meantime you can attend the junior college that we're starting." It was being taught by other internees who were college students, which meant it was like going to a class where a student teacher was teaching. I went to one class and decided that I was not going to learn anything there, so I opted instead to get one of the jobs that were being offered to keep everybody occupied.

The jobs came in three categories: unskilled, which paid twelve dollars a

month; skilled, which earned sixteen; and professional, such as a doctor or dentist, which drew a princely nineteen dollars monthly—plus forced room and board, of course. We were paid not in cash but rather in a kind of coupon.

My first job, which paid sixteen dollars a month, was weaving camouflage nets, which was one of the primary industries of Manzanar. These were huge sheets of netting onto which strips of burlap were woven to create patterns. There was a large building that looked something like an open warehouse where one of the completed nets would be hung. They would stretch another unfinished net over this and then we were supposed to take burlap strips and tie them on, duplicating the patterns exactly. The crew of net weavers on which I served was comprised of people who were a bit older than me, though we all had one thing in common: even though our pay rate indicated we were “skilled,” we were totally incompetent when it came to making camouflage nets. I believe we held some kind of record for screwing them up. It was not that we were deliberately trying to sabotage them, we simply had no facility whatsoever for tying little bits of burlap onto a surface on a vertical course. The army officers who came in to check our work would fix them, and we would then get it all wrong again on the next one. The Germans never realized how much we were unwittingly contributing to the war effort . . . on their behalf! Even though our mistakes were ultimately corrected by others, I think the officers in charge were quite happy and relieved when we moved onto other jobs.

My post-net weaving job was as a shuttle driver taking the elementary school teachers assigned to Manzanar back and forth between their residences, which were located at the foot of the camp near the administration area, and the school, which was located in the center of the camp, about a half mile away. Shortly before we were interned, I had gotten a driver's license, so every morning I would take the group that would teach elementary school and drive them up to the middle of the camp, and then pick them up for lunch. For the time in between, there was not anything to do but sit around the school administrative office. The head of the educational system was a woman named Dr. Genevieve Carter. Since I was nearly always available and spent so much time sitting in her office, and because I was the right age for the aptitude tests that they were just beginning to develop at that point, she decided to use me as a guinea pig for her high school class by trying out the tests on me. She figured my scores would represent the “average” student, and she could use those to compare the work of the other kids. But as I began taking these aptitude tests, she became less and less satisfied with the results.

"You're scoring awful high on all these things," she would tell me. "I don't know if you're a good subject." When we got to the art aptitude test, she finally threw up her hands up and said, "You're of absolutely no use to me. You're not a good example of what an average student is." But she added: "I notice that you're spending a certain amount of time amusing yourself by sketching. I have a warehouse full of art supplies for the school and I want you to have access to it any time you want it, just go in there and pick out whatever you feel like and bring it back."

Dr. Carter was very helpful. Thanks to her, I had access to all the art materials that I thought I would need, and from then on I spent a lot of my time drawing and sketching. I recorded my impressions of the camp in a sketchbook.

As we grew more accustomed to our new lives, we found more opportunities for activities and recreation. There was quite a bit of sports and social activity, especially among the men in the camp, and with the money we earned at our various jobs we were able to buy clothes and other goods at a camp store that quickly opened up. The variety of fashions that was being offered was not great, but at least it offered a change from the clothes that we had brought with us, as well as the regulation navy pea coats that everyone was issued upon arrival. While this may sound like a classic "company store" set up, it really wasn't. It was more like a post exchange on an army base.

Some of the older boys who were out of high school and looking for something to do decided to form an organization for a group of us, a sort of social club in which they took the lead. They began to organize sporting leagues and find places on which the leagues would play. I became part of one of the participating groups. The name the older fellows who formed the group picked for their organization was the "Manzanites." That name always struck me as a bit sophomoric, though I have to give them credit for working so hard to make the place more livable for us.

The issei were going out somewhere in the desert and gathering a black clay with which to make level plateaus in between the housing blocks (remember, the camp was on a slope in the foothills), and those plateaus would be transformed into basketball courts, complete with very well constructed, strong backboards. Before long, each block had its own court. Of course, after you played on that black clay you came out pretty grimy. By the end of a game, a lot of us looked like chimney sweeps.

Even more ambitious than the basketball courts was the baseball park that the issei built, which came complete with stands and an announcer's booth. They continued building things, including an auditorium and an out-

door movie theater. In the meantime, the leaders of the Manzanites managed to discover a place where several hand-cranked ice-shaving machines were stored. Anyone who has lived in the Owens Valley of California knows how hot it can get in the summer, so they got a couple of those machines and set them up, and then assembled a group of people who wanted to show off their various talents, and put on a talent show. I was involved in the concession end of this scheme. The Manzanites got hold of blocks of ice from the camp kitchen and also acquired flavored syrups, and we started to sell sno-cones, which are very popular among the Japanese. Guys would take turns laboriously cranking the machines to shave the ice into "snow." We did this a couple times and made quite a bit of money from it, about eight hundred dollars. We also earned quite a bit of disfavor from the general community of internees, who criticized us for blowing all that money on dances and the like for our own amusement, instead of using it for the general welfare of the camp.

As soon as we became aware of this displeasure, we decided to obtain a couple of first-run movies to be shown in a makeshift outdoor theater that had been built, consisting primarily of a screen erected between two of the housing blocks, and we invited the entire camp to attend. The prints of the films were arranged by the head of the camp, working through the War Relocation Authority. We ran the films for a couple nights, without charge, and suddenly everything was peaceful again. That gesture quickly made us the stars of this small, manufactured community.

The Manzanites who served as advisors to the group, the oldest of whom were barely in their twenties, were the ones who figured it out. They were resourceful go-getters. The rest of us, who weren't quite of a go-getting nature, might come up with an idea and pass it onto them, but they were the ones who went out and made them happen. These are the same type of people who today are putting together things like the Japanese American National Museum. One of my fellow Manzanites, Bruce Kaji (who was in my age bracket instead of the older group), was active in the museum's creation. I still see him occasionally.

As time went on in the camp, the relationships between the internees and the U.S. Army personnel who were working as guards began to relax. They had been somewhat strained at first, particularly in the aftermath of the "riot" at the administration building. What helped to that end was the fact that some actual veterans who had been fighting in the Pacific Theater of the war, at places like Guadalcanal, began to transfer in and replace the young, raw recruits who had been stationed at Manzanar, but were now being deployed overseas. With these older, more experienced soldiers on guard duty, there

was a lot of give and take between the more macho men at the camp and the guards, with the soldiers teaching the internees how to box in return for the internees teaching the veterans something about judo and other martial arts. A subtle shift began to take place when the guards began to realize that we internees were *Americans* and we had no intention of running around and creating trouble. (Ironically, many of us at the time also felt a certain amount of trepidation that, if the Japanese did win the war, we would continue to be internees indefinitely . . . because we *were* Americans.)

Another event that happened outside of the camp—in fact, outside of the country—ended up making quite an impact on both the internees and the military. In Hawaii they had no internment camps, so the members of the Japanese community down there lived their lives as they always had, like anybody else on the island. A feeling began to rise among the Japanese men of Hawaii that they had to find a way to prove they were true Americans, just as worthy as anybody else. So they began to enlist in the service and eventually comprised the core of the 100th Infantry Battalion. This battalion, made up primarily of these Hawaiians, were trained and sent to Italy, and served under General Mark Clark. They were very active in the Italian campaign and became the most highly decorated unit in the history of the USA (some years later a film was made about this battalion called *Go for Broke!*, a Hawaiian phrase which had been the unit's battle cry). After seeing them in action, General Clark commented that they were the finest troops he had ever commanded. Suddenly the U.S. Government, which was utilizing every resource available for the war effort, particularly manpower, realized that they were overlooking another group of potential soldiers, and they began to send recruiting teams into the internment camps.

Army recruiters started coming into Manzanar and telling those of us who were approaching recruitment age the story of the 100th Infantry Battalion, after which they would pitch for volunteers to join the army. We would sit and listen to these lectures, and afterward, it was almost inevitable that one of the internees would raise his hand, stand up, and ask: "If I volunteer and join the army, with the possibility of being sent into combat and being killed, what are you going to do with the rest of my family?" The recruiters did not know what to say. After one such session, these gung-ho military recruiters were reduced to a group of pretty dejected-looking guys. They shrugged their shoulders and admitted: "We're under orders. The army has sent us out here to do a job. But sometimes we feel like such idiots."

They also sent out a questionnaire, which was a loyalty test. These included two major questions: "Would you serve if you were drafted?" That was an easy

“Yes” since you were pretty much stuck serving anyway if drafted. But the next question was: “Would you be ready, willing and able to go out and fight in any area of the world to which the United States sent you?” That was not the exact wording, but it carried with it the connotation that for some reason, you would be eagerly looking forward to picking up a gun and shipping out. You were supposed to answer this question properly with another “Yes,” but I answered very honestly. I wrote “No.” I didn’t want to go anywhere where people were shooting at me. I didn’t care whether they were German, Japanese, Italian, or anything else, I just didn’t want to be shot at. I was not morally opposed to the war; in fact, I still believe it was a necessary undertaking, giving what was going on in the world at the time, and I’ve always felt that President Franklin Roosevelt understood that this country was eventually going to have to get involved in the fighting, and may even have taken steps to move us into the conflict to counter the growing attitude of isolationism in the United States. But on a personal level, the thought of having bombs lobbed at me was not my idea of a great way to pass into adulthood, which I implied by my answer. Somehow, I got away with it.

Many, however, did take the opportunity to join, since it was, at least, a way out of the camps. Only recently I met with a former internee who had been drafted into the army right out of one of the camps, and he recounted the strange experience of coming back from his basic training to visit his parents, who were still interned, and walking into the camp, through the barbed wire, wearing the uniform of his country—the same country that was holding his loved ones captive. He said everything seemed to be so out of place. Since this fellow was a pediatrician by profession, after the war he was sent to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to make studies of the effect of the radiation on children.

Another opportunity for volunteerism was more to my liking. They began asking for men to go up and work in the states of Idaho and Montana and help farmers up there, both in planting season and harvesting season. A group of five or six of us from the Manzanites decided to give this a shot, make a little money, and have a chance to get outside for a while. We signed up and next thing we knew we were on our way to Idaho to help thin sugar beets.

These sugar beets were planted in such a way that they practically came up like grass, and the whole idea was to chop through the rows of these plants, but leave one standing every six or eight inches apart so they’d have a chance to grow into a full-sized beet. The way you did this was to bend over and walk sideways, holding a hoe in your right hand to chop up the excess stuff, while

you picked up the parts that the hoe missed with your left hand. The idea was to be neat so that the final result was a field of well-placed rows of little sugar beet plants. One of the secrets that the real farm hands let us in on was that a sharp hoe was a big help, so at the end of each row we would sit down and sharpen the hoe blade, whether they needed it or not, just so we could rest and ease part of the pain in our backs. It was not long before we had the sharpest hoes in Idaho. We filed them down so often they were like fishing knives.

Since so many of the immigrant Japanese had come to this country to establish farms, they took to this sort of activity as though they had been born to it. It was a piece of cake for them and the farmers loved them. My buddies and I, however, were all city kids with no farm experience, and when we tried beet thinning we did a horrible job. We made such a mess of things that we actually felt sorry for those farmers, particularly one poor guy whose crop we thinned to the point of partially destroying it. Seeing what we had done, we got busy picking up some of the cut pieces and planting them very neatly in rows. When the farmer came out at the end of the day to pick us up and take us back to the camp where we were bunking, he took a quick glance at the field and saw what *looked* like a proper job of cutting. He said, "Hey, that's a good job," and then drove us back. I've often wondered what he must have discovered the next morning, walking out there and seeing a section of his plants broken off. Fortunately, we didn't work very fast, so we weren't able to butcher up too much of his crop. Even more fortunately, we didn't go back to the same farm the next day, otherwise the guy might have been waiting for us with a gun.

I now had two job skills I could never dare put on a resume: camouflage net weaving and sugar beet thinning.

We were guilty of other acts that were not well appreciated by the War Relocation Authority. One time someone was out flushing birds with a .22 rifle from the trees on top of the hills. Seeing this as an opportunity to create a fuss for those in authority, we went in to the WRA and reported that some rednecks were taking gunshots at *us*. This resulted in the hoped-for excited concern on the part of those in charge.

At the end of our one season as farm hands, four of us decided we were going to stay outside instead of going back to Manzanar. Even though we had incurred the disfavor of the WRA at that time, we went into the Authority office and gave them a pitch about how we had gotten a taste of what it felt like to really function in a way that helped the war effort. We had heard there was fruit to be harvested down in Utah and we asked for permission to take a bus

down there to help. All of a sudden, they thought we were terrific kids, and they gave us permission to go.

We got on the bus that took us right through the farm area, and we ended up in Ogden, Utah. Our timing was absolutely perfect: we arrived just as a race riot was going on in the town. Apparently there were some Hawaiian Japanese who had gotten into a tangle with the uniformed personnel from a nearby base or fort and were being chased all over town by the army (Hawaiian Japanese were known to be a bit feisty in any situation). It was almost like the Zoot Suit riots that took place in Los Angeles during the war. So upon arrival, we were cautioned to be careful and to be ready to run from trouble, should we have to.

Once things had settled down we got jobs at the Del Monte canning factory. The company had installed these automated systems for canning peas in which the cans would roll through this assembly line while the peas would drop in from a large dispenser. Then the cans would travel down the line to be capped. It was our job to take them off the assembly line and put them into these huge containers that had wheels on them so they could roll them over to wherever they packaged them. After a short while, lugging peas around quickly became boring, so we found another way to keep our interest up. We thought it would be pretty cool to rip the tee-shirts off of one another and have the torn cloth take the place of the some of the peas in the cans.

There are times when I wonder why we weren't thrown in jail for some of these escapades. The only defense I have for our actions is to say that we were all kids who hadn't had the chance to get out and raise hell like our non-Japanese fellow teens. But our bosses at Del Monte caught on to what we were doing very quickly, and we were—pardon the expression—*canned*.

From that triumph we moved on to a job in a refrigeration plant. Given our employment record, it might seem strange that we kept getting hired, but you have to remember that during the war, companies were always looking for sources of labor because so many of the able-bodied workers were off somewhere in the world getting shot at.

I've never been sure why this is true, but in so many companies the primary objective seems to be to take packaged things and move them from one place to another place. At the refrigeration plant, the packaged things were cartons of frozen cherries, and they weighed about twenty pounds apiece. We were working at the very bottom floor of the building and we had to move around these frozen cherries, and by the end of fifty minutes, you had to go back upstairs and thaw out. We had all taken up smoking by this time, and this was at a time when cigarettes were still allowed in the workplace, but we

discovered it was so cold that we were unable to taste the regular cigarettes. Our taste buds were half-frozen. So we took to smoking menthol cigarettes.

After a short stint at this refrigeration plant, two more fellows from our group took off and went back to the camp, which left only a fellow named Victor Takahashi, who was what back then might have been dubbed a “hipster,” and me. We landed jobs as dishwashers in the kitchen of the Ben Lomond Hotel, which was the largest hotel in Ogden. Washing the dishes there was really more a matter of rinsing them off and then putting them into an assembly line dishwasher, the kind that all big hotels had. We worked there for quite a while and enjoyed it, chiefly because the food was good.

However, my eighteenth birthday was quickly approaching, and after thinking it over, I came to a conclusion: since facing the draft board was very likely in the very near future, whether I liked it or not, I decided it would be a good idea if I went back to camp, because there I would at least be with people I knew. Victor and I bid the Ben Lomond Hotel goodbye and jumped on a train that was part of a line called the Bamburger, which ran between Ogden and Salt Lake City, the location of the nearest WRA office. My plan was to inform them that I wanted to return to the camp, but I wasn’t about to pay for the bus fare myself, so it was up to them to get me back. But when we walked into the office and gave them our names, they announced that the FBI was looking for us.

That was certainly comforting!

Apparently, we were on a list of internees who had suddenly disappeared, because we were supposed to still be up north picking fruit.

Back at the camp I celebrated my eighteenth birthday, and took a physical for potential entry into the service. As it turned out, I had little to worry about. The doctor looked down at my feet and said, “Wowwww.” It was not the most professional of exclamations, but still an acknowledgment that even looking at the top of my feet you could see how flat they were. Flat feet, of course, was one of the conditions that kept young men out of the military. On top of that I had very poor eyesight and was required to wear glasses, so between those two things, they told me, “You’re no good to us,” and gave me a 4-F classification.

It was not too long afterward when we began to hear rumblings that they were thinking of reopening the West Coast. Overall, my experience at the camp was not one that I would call tragic. It was certainly not as traumatic as those of others with whom I’ve spoken or whose memoirs I have read. I guess if I had more intellect and more sensitivity for the total scene, I would

feel that I could express a much deeper sense of a dark period in my life, but I really can't. It was another area of unawareness, I suppose.

If I have any lasting regret, it is that neither I nor anyone in my family has been able to locate the sketchbook containing all of the drawings and sketches I did while at the camp. The Japanese American National Museum, with which I have had dealings for several years, has also tried searching, but so far the sketchbook has remained elusive. I would love to see those drawings again, if for no other reason, to see if the images recorded at the time match my memories, or perhaps even reveal more of the mindset of that kid who worked so hard at just trying to get by so long ago.

NINE OLD MEN AND A GUY NAMED WALT

In 1944 President Roosevelt signed the order to begin the process of closing down the internment camps, but they did not shut down immediately. Understandably, a good many of the internees showed a great deal of reluctance to leave the camps. These had, after all, been their homes for three years or better, and since they had been forced to leave so much of their previous lives behind in order to be transported to places like Manzanar, Tule Lake, Heart Mountain in Wyoming, and Gila River in Arizona, there was not a lot to go back to. Even though I had jumped at the opportunity to get out of Manzanar when release was offered—I was out by February 1945—my parents stayed behind for a while. Since I was young and would have been starting out on my own anyway, the three-year diversion did not seem to make that great a difference, particularly since the entire experience still seemed not quite real. But for the issei, who had to try and rebuild their lives and professions, rather than begin to establish them, the government had to provide more time and the chance to help them set themselves back up. My folks did not leave the camp until sometime between VE Day, which was May of 1945, and VJ Day, which was in August. They were still not citizens, though like so many of their generation, they became naturalized citizens as soon as it was permitted by the government sometime in the 1950s.

After the war, my father made an attempt to get back into the green grocery business, operating a produce section in a market located in Maywood, south of Los Angeles. That faded out after a while and then he took up gardening. He acquired a truck and built his own business, in which he was quite happy. He and some men working with him in the business even formed a union for Japanese gardeners, which is active to this day. This set-up was hugely successful, and the retirees today are still receiving a pension and have medical insurance because of it.

The Walt Disney Studios, where I had just signed on (for a sumptuous eighteen dollars a week, minus aggressive wartime taxes), was also a union shop, though that was not a popular topic of discussion around Walt's office. Unionization had been forced on Walt after a highly acrimonious 1941 strike, and Walt was not happy about it. He died a quarter century later still not very happy about it. He considered the strike a breach of loyalty and actually refused to speak to some of the men who had been its chief instigators, such as Art Babbitt, who had been one of his top artists, after the strike was over. This lingering resentment continued on for years even among the artists. One of the staffers who did not support the strike was an animator and director named Charles A. "Nick" Nichols, who in the 1960s took over the animation direction duties for all Hanna-Barbera shows. During Nick's tenure at H-B, Art Babbitt signed on to work there, and even though it was decades after the Disney strike, the two of them still had trouble talking to each other.

I never had any such problems with Walt, though I never had the opportunity to work with him that closely. I do, however, remember the very first time I met him. It was in an elevator at the studio. The door opened and I got on, and there was Walt, wearing his trademark glower. The door closed again and I was alone in an elevator car with the boss of the studio, who happened to be this world-famous figure, to whom I had never actually been introduced. One of the first things new employees were told upon starting work at Disney's was that nobody was allowed to call him "Mr. Disney." He was Walt and that was the way he wanted to be addressed. So I stammered something incisive like, "Uh . . . hi, Walt." He cleared his throat and muttered, "Umm, uh, er . . ." and went back to glowering.

That was my first face-to-face contact with Walt Disney. It wasn't much of a conversation, but it was memorable.

The Disney Studio had been recommended to me by those art directors in Manzanar because of its comparatively liberal attitude toward the races, and it certainly had not been a problem for me to be hired. But after I started there, I began to hear comments about how few people of the Jewish faith were employed there. I can only think of three at the time I was there: Marc Davis, Ted Berman, and Art Babbitt, all animators. As I mentioned, Walt did have a problem with Babbitt, but I believe the rift was based entirely on the strike, rather than anything that had to do with the religious aspect. In the forty years since Walt's death he has become the ultimate mythic figure, and some people have delighted in trying to deify him, while others have delighted in trying to demonize him. The truth is, he was a human being, with the same

kinds of likes and dislikes, foibles, and occasional prejudices as other human beings. If he carried any kind of baggage over my heritage, or my experience in the camps, one way or the other, I never heard about it.

The War Relocation Authority, however, managed to hear about me and my new career in animation, and as a result, they turned me into a poster boy.

As 1945 progressed, and so many of the internees were demonstrating reluctance to leave the camps, the WRA started to get desperate. It was almost as anxious to get the Japanese Americans to evacuate the places as they had been to get us all there in the first place. And it was not having an easy time convincing some people. Someone at the Authority found out about this young kid—that is to say, me—who just went out and got a job at the famous Walt Disney Studios, and this bit of information delighted them. What's more, it perfectly served their purpose. They thought it would be a very encouraging piece of news for people who were nervous about leaving. So they set up a photo session in an office somewhere with a makeshift drawing board and I sat there and posed for the camera and pretended to know everything about animation. I was told the photos were going to be used on posters and brochures and the like, though I never saw one.

I don't recall being aware of the irony at the time, but my entire wartime experience was book-ended by signs: one signed by FDR demanding the evacuation of my family from our home to take up residence in an internment camp, and the other one featuring me welcoming all internees back to normal life.

Entry level in the animation department at Disney's was a class in inbetweening, or making drawings that link the key "acting" poses that the animator makes, which are sometimes called "controlling" or "extreme" drawings, since they control the action and the performance. In this class we were taught how to make sure that the action moved smoothly, that nothing in the animation jittered, and that the timing was correct in terms of spacing out the way the characters moved, but it was also a functioning department for the studio, since we were learning by working on actual scenes.

Like everyone else, I started in this inbetweening pool, and it was there that the guys I thought of as the "old-timers," which is to say they were ones who preceded me at the studio by several months, explained the standard career path structure to me. They said that if everything went to schedule, after about eight months of working as an inbetweenner, I would be requested by one of the animators to join his unit. At that point, according to the knowledgeable ones, my position would be raised to that of a "breakdown" artist, which was a level specific to Disney's. A breakdown man was basically a higher level of inbetweenner who would follow the assistant animator by breaking

down the action beyond the extremes, and put in drawings that took care of overlapping action or were some of the more difficult transitional drawings between the extremes. From there, with talent and luck, one might go on to be an assistant animator, who was in charge of the phase of animation called “clean up,” which is making the rough, scratchy animation drawings look neat and finely lined, and on model (meaning it adheres to the specifications of the designs), and ready for the ink-and-paint girls. The final step was to become a full animator.

One of the people I met in this inbetweening class was Bud Partch, the younger brother of Virgil “Vip” Partch, who was a well-known magazine and newspaper cartoonist. For years, his strip “Big George” was nationally syndicated. Like Bud, Vip had worked at Disney for a short while and, also like Bud, had a unique outlook on things. If the road ahead was naturally straight, the Partch brothers managed to throw in a few curves, just for the heck of it. Vip, for instance, had a penchant for drawing everybody with six fingers.

Bud was just as much a free spirit as Vip. During my first month at the studio, Bud came over to me and said, “Hey, we have a treat today . . . let’s sneak out and go over to the recording studio.” So I went with him (in those days, I went along with just about everybody) over to the recording studio, which was part of a small soundstage on the lot, not really knowing what to expect. We walked in and sat down and watched Cozy Cole, who was at that time a very famous drummer who had played with the Cab Calloway Orchestra, playing drum solo takes for the sound effects department. We sat and listened to him doing these wild takes for a solid hour, though Cozy was probably there for a lot longer than that. Nobody bothered us. When we had had enough, we just got up and went back to work.

I became very friendly with Bud, who was always cooking up one thing or other. One of his favorite gags was to stop a woman in the hallway and begin talking to her. Most women back then wore skirts, and Bud would carry a small mirror with him, which he would manage to slide onto the floor and then surreptitiously position it with his foot until it was under the woman’s skirt. Now, for most jokers, that would be the payoff of the gag, but Bud was after something else: he wanted to see the woman’s reaction once she discovered what he was doing. So during the conversation he would sneak little looks down to the floor until she looked down to see what he was glancing at, and see the mirror. Different women provided him with different kinds of reaction.

Another of Bud’s gags involved our animation desks. Each one had a light underneath the drawing surface so that you could put one piece of paper on

top of another and see through the drawing you just finished underneath. There were holes cut in the backs of each desk to let the electric cord for the light pass through to the wall socket. As you sat at your desk, this hole would be at about the level of your upper leg. What Bud would do is crouch behind the desk and peer through the hole, making sure that his eye was plainly visible. Then he would make a noise to get the attention of the animator, who would bend down and look under the desk to see what was making the noise, only to see this disembodied eyeball staring back!

As close as I was to Bud, I never got to meet Vip, though I did hear him one time when he came back to visit Bud. The two were in an adjoining room and their voices carried into my office. I knew there were two guys talking in there, but I could not tell which was which because they sounded exactly alike. They had this strange way of talking in a particular cadence, and the timbre of their voices was identical.

I did see plenty of Vip's work, though. During his stint at Disney's he drew a lot of cartoons that were never meant to be inked and painted. They were often his commentary on what was going on around him. One that the studio staff saved long after Vip had left concerned the job structure I've just described. It depicted a man who had just been told he was going to be raised from the level of an inbetweener to that of a breakdown man. The sketch showed several figures standing in profile on a step ladder. On the top step of the ladder was the animator, who was urinating on the assistant animator one step down. The assistant animator, in turn, was urinating on the breakdown man from above, but the breakdown man was also being urinated on by the inbetweener one step below him, who was aiming upward.

One can only assume that by this point, Vip had gotten a bit fed up with working in an animation studio.

I was more content with following the standard procedure of advancement, which is why when I was suddenly called into the office after about three months, I thought, "I must have screwed up again and they're going to fire me." But instead of firing me, I was told that an animator named Bob Carlson had requested that I become part of his unit as a breakdown man. My new office would be in the animation building. So just like my school experience, I was running a little bit ahead of schedule.

I worked for Bob Carlson for quite a while and in the process received my very first piece of actual animation: a shot of Donald Duck running off into the distance over a hill, for a short cartoon whose title I can no longer recall. The major project on which I worked for Bob was the "Mickey and the Beanstalk" segment of the film *Fun and Fancy Free*, and he also taught me quite a

bit in terms of taking advantage of what film and the way it goes through a projector can accomplish on its own, without having to have a perfect set of inbetween forms. As with all of my studio mentors, I also received practical information, such as how to sharpen a double-edged razor blade by sliding it around in a glass. While this sort of knowledge may not have had an animation application, it was useful to anyone living on a budget. But because I was so new, it meant I was affected by the fact that Walt suddenly ran out of money.

Today the notion of the Walt Disney Studio running out of money might sound more fantastic than a dragon breathing flames on a medieval castle. But the war had taken a toll on Disney's. In order to make ends meet, for the first half of the 1940s much of the studio's output had been work done for the government on behalf of the war effort, so he and his brother Roy, who was his business manager, were having some difficulty ramping back up into commercial production. When cash was short and he could not meet payroll, Walt had no choice but to let some of his staff go, and the newest people were the first ones cut loose.

I received a layoff notice, and figured, "Well, that's another thing I'll be able to add to my list of experiences, because now I'll be able to collect unemployment." But the higher-ups at the studio seemed pretty sure that it was going to be a very short-lived break and that they would soon call me back, which indeed they did. I think I collected only one check from the unemployment office before returning to work. But when I got back I found that I was no longer assigned to Bob Carlson's unit. Instead I was back in the breakdown pool.

Finally a feature scene came down through the pipeline, one from the "Pecos Bill" segment of a compilation film called *Melody Time*. In it, Bill's girlfriend, "Slue Foot Sue" was riding on this big, bucking fish (if you know the story of "Pecos Bill," you know it is about outrageous tall tales). It was kind of a wild scene and considered to be one of the more difficult ones to inbetween. But I went ahead and did it.

A couple days later, somebody came down to the breakdown bullpen and said, "Pack up, you're leaving." I thought, "Oh, god, they're firing me . . . again." But instead I was told that I was going to move into another office in what was called D-Wing in the animation building, which housed the offices of animators like Ollie Johnston, Frank Thomas, Eric Larsen, Marc Davis, Ward Kimball, and Milt Kahl, and their assistants. The room I was given was in between Eric's and Milt's, and I shared it with an assistant animator named John Freeman.

While it was contrary to the rigid studio advancement structure, I never seemed to function as an actual breakdown man, whose job it was to work for the assistant animator. I always worked directly with the animators, who would request that I put in the follow-up drawings for their rough animation scenes. This was good, since it gave me the opportunity to learn a heckuva lot more about animation more quickly. John Freeman, who was Milt's official assistant, was also very accommodating in offering to teach me various things about the process, and we became very friendly.

Milt, Frank, Ollie, Marc, Ward, and Eric were part of the group of animators who are now known as "The Nine Old Men," though at the time they were not referred to as such. They were simply called the guys on D-Wing. The rest of the Nine were Les Clark, Woolie Reitherman, and John Lounsbery, and their offices were elsewhere in the building.

The Nine Old Men have of course become legendary; even those who don't know a great deal about the history of animation have likely heard of them, and for good reason: they were probably the most influential, accomplished, and creative of all the artists at the studio. What most people don't realize, though, is that the origin of the name was not so much a term of endearment, or a recognition of age and experience, since they were only in their thirties or forties when they were labeled as "Old Men," but rather a joke put-down, based on President Franklin Roosevelt's assessment of his Supreme Court as nine old men too aged to have a new thought. Walt threw the same charge at his key animators and the name stuck (though I think the only real objection came not from the accusation of thoughtlessness but being characterized as old). The press picked up the label in the 1950s, and they remained the Nine Old Men for the rest of their careers.

Working with some of the top artists in the industry is, of course, a great way to learn, though each had a completely different method of imparting information. Out of all of the old men, Milt Kahl was the most uncompromising. Working for him could be a challenge, because you had to reach for a consistently high level of quality at all times. He was never much for explaining or describing all the nuances of approach to animation—he just did it.

Frank and Ollie, on the other hand, were extremely articulate, something that can readily be seen from the books on animation they wrote in later years. They knew how to explain what they were trying to do and what a particular character meant and they were extremely concerned with shepherding these flat, two-dimensional characters into a living, breathing reality. The whole point of it for them was to find a way to give any character a heart and a brain, and really make them living creatures. And eventually, because they

were so well educated, they were able to express that and communicate that to their units in a very effective way.

It is sometimes hard to think about Frank and Ollie as individuals since they did just about everything together. They were longtime friends, having met as young men in art school. They lived next door to each other for most of their lives, and because of that they carpooled to work together. All this togetherness resulted in a continuous flow of ideas that impacted their work. They would constantly discuss the scenes they were working on in the car back and forth to work, and new ideas would grow out of those discussions. They would then rush into their offices and begin to change things. They were forever putting new ideas into each scene as they were animating it, which was great for the films, but it drove the people who were trying to learn from them a little crazy. If someone was looking for a structure of thinking and how to advance an idea from concept through development and onto execution, Frank and Ollie were of little help, because they didn't work that way.

One thing the two did not share was an office. Ollie had a corner office at the very end of the hallway in D-Wing, across from Eric Larsen, which meant he was kind of hidden in the corner. I did not have that much contact with him and therefore did not get to know him all that well. Neither did I do much with Les Clark, who was considered the senior member of the group, or with Woolie Reitherman or John Lounsbery. They were all extremely fine animators, obviously, but I did not have the kind of ongoing personal contact with them as I did with Milt, Marc, Frank, and Ward. John Lounsbery was a rather private individual, but he was an excellent draftsman. Woolie was always out there, surrounded by an entourage. He had quite a bit of flair and a lot of presence.

Ward Kimball was the kind of talent who was always looking for something different in animation. I think he would have been very happy if he could have split his time over at UPA, a studio which was formed in the mid-1940s by a group of artists, including some ex-Disney staffers, who shared a much more modernistic, stylized approach to animation. Even though he never worked at UPA, Ward managed to sneak some of the same kinds of innovations past Walt, such as the Oscar-winning cartoon *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom*, which was done in the direction of the UPA style.

Ward was also a musician, and famous for the Dixieland combo he put together called "The Firehouse Five Plus Two," and a bit of an eccentric who installed a full-sized railroad in his spacious backyard. Ollie Johnston, like Walt, another train enthusiast, had a miniature railroad in his backyard (which I think ran over into Frank Thomas's as well), but Ward's was the real thing:

two full, working locomotive engines running on two hundred yards of track, as well as a roundhouse and a depot that had originally been built for the live-action segments of the film *So Dear to My Heart*, which he had managed to talk Walt into letting him have once shooting was done.

Despite his reputation as being free-wheeling, Ward was a very organized fellow. At his house, he had a large assortment of tools, which he let his kids play with. Being youngsters, of-course, they would leave them lying around his backyard, which was huge and grassy (and which included a certain kind of crop that, shall we say, came in handy for those times when one needed to relax after a hard day's work at the studio). Some of us asked him one time how he managed to hang onto all these tools when his kids left them lying all around the yard. "I paint the handles red," he explained. "It's easy to find them in the green grass."

Once I was working on some project at the studio and decided that I had to ink it myself, but I had no equipment for it. I knew that Ward inked some of his personal projects, so I went down to his office and asked if I could borrow a pen and ink. He brought out an entire collection of pens and took a good half hour pulling out each nib and explaining what it was for, and what effect could be achieved through using it, and then offered to lend me the entire set. He was a very generous guy.

If Ward was an innovator, Marc Davis was more of a traditionalist who leaned far into the fine arts approach to making a drawing statement. *Bambi* utilized many of his conceptual drawings. Marc was perhaps the most facile draftsman of the Nine, as good as Milt Kahl, but he was not an animator at heart. I learned sometime later that Marc got into animation per se because Walt had gone to Frank and Milt and said, "You have to teach this guy to animate." They took him under their wings, but Marc would always insist that even though he drew well, he would never achieve the level of quality as an animator that Frank and Ollie and Milt and Eric possessed.

Marc's most indelible characteristic was the fact that he was cool. He taught me as much about life as he did about animation; things like developing a sense of class and how a man should treat a woman. He'd say, "Don't buy a dozen red roses, you buy one long-stemmed rose, and you present that to her, and that's class." He also taught me things like how to smoke with a cigarette holder and how to mix a martini. I had a wonderful time around Marc.

As well as being the studio's top artists, the Nine Old Men were treated a bit like the stars of a live-action movie studio in that they were all under contract. The rest of us punched a time clock. I discovered very quickly how to

get the most out of the structured workday (I was always good about finding out such things). You had to clock in at 8:00 in the morning, after which you would head straight to the commissary and buy a newspaper, and sit there eating breakfast. Once you had finished breakfast, sometime around 8:30, you would wander over to the office and start work at around nine or so—once you had finished reading the paper. This was the routine for a while, until the front office put a stop to it.

You couldn't really blame us for wanting to spend more time in the commissary since the food back then was excellent. The story goes that Walt lured one of the chefs away from the 21 in New York and put him in charge of the place. The best menu day of the week was always Thursday, which was prime rib day, something everybody eagerly awaited. I was invited back to the Disney commissary a few years ago and I have to say that the difference between the old cafeteria-style dining room and the current fast-food set up is like night and day.

For many of the studio staff, though, food was not the only thing with which they were concerned. There was also drink. Not long after I started at Disney's I began being regaled with stories about the wonderful and riotous studio Christmas parties. They were held on the lot and were all-day events, and a lot of the guys would get their own liquor even before they started serving at the party bar. Then the animators would start chasing the girls in the traffic department—who for some reason were all barefoot—a practice that eventually had to be curtailed when the animators' wives found out and raised all kinds of hell. For the first Christmas parties I attended I got memos beforehand from the personnel department informing me that they would appreciate it if I would refrain from having any alcoholic beverages during any of these parties, because I was still underage, not yet twenty-one! While those memos did not have much affect on my behavior at the parties, I regret not having saved them.

The festivities were not restricted to the studio, of course. Or Christmas. We would also attend parties at somebody's home—occasionally Milt would have a little soiree—and you always had to be careful because the guys mixed their martinis in pitchers, and they kept topping your glass. Not being able to count the number of martinis that you're consuming is not really the best way to drink them. Marc Davis, among his other talents, professed to be an expert at concocting a cure for hangovers, but the real champion on that score was the studio nurse, whose name was Hazel. I don't know how well she dealt with injuries, but she was renowned for her vitamin B-12 shots for hangovers. She had quite a lot of it available, and since the studio was filled with

personnel that came in more often than not with hangovers, she was quite popular. I think those B-12 shots were why they kept her around.

There were, of course, many other very fine animators outside of the Nine, including a fellow named Hal Ambro, who does not seem to get a lot of attention from animation historians and writers. But Hal would be one of the first animators assigned to a film right after the Nine had taken their sequences. Fred Moore was another outstanding artist who had been with Disney since the early sound days, when he was regarded as a boy genius. He had a knack for drawing young girl characters, such as the Mermaids from *Peter Pan*. Everybody in the studio wanted a Freddy Moore drawing of a teen-aged girl. By the time I got to the studio, though, he was a bit past his prime, largely due to an over-fondness for alcohol.

Yet another fine artist with whom I had a lot of contact because he worked closely with the Nine Old Men was Ken Anderson, who had a solid architectural background, which made him a natural for later Disney projects such as the development of Sleeping Beauty's Castle at Disneyland. He was also an excellent draftsman whose storyboard work impressed the one person everyone strove to impress, Walt himself. Looking over one of Ken's boards one time, Walt said: "Now, that's the way a storyboard is supposed to look!"

The staff at Disney's during that period was probably the largest and greatest gathering of top talent that the animation industry has ever seen. But if any one person at the Disney studio has been overlooked in recent years, purely in terms of creative work, it has to be Walt Disney himself. Time has managed to relegate Walt to the position of "genius" and nothing more, which while intended as high praise, is really in a sense demeaning, since a lot of people have no idea of what he really did. The truth was that there was little that went on at the studio that escaped Walt's eye. He was famous for going back into the studio in the middle of the night and examining the storyboards that were going to be pitched to him the next morning, so by the time of the pitch he would practically have them memorized and would sit there in the session, rhythmically clinking his ring on the arm of the chair while he listened, which was a characteristic (if somewhat disconcerting) habit of his.

It is also rumored that Walt's presence in the small screening room in which we would look at pencil footage was the reason it was called the "sweat-box," since the task of awaiting Walt's judgment on something raised a lot of perspiration, particularly in the writers. Some have written that the sweatbox was as cramped and unpleasant as its name, but the first time I encountered it I was actually rather impressed. It had plush chairs to sit in while watching the screen, and at the time I thought, "This is the way to watch a piece of

film.” Then as I leaned the chair back, my gaze was directed toward the ceiling, which was metallic. Upon closer inspection I realized that the real ceiling was obscured by the hundreds of push-pins that had been embedded into it.

Firing push-pins at the walls or at others was, for some reason, the unofficial sport of the animation industry, and at Disney’s there were push-pin marksmen who could fire off four at one time. But looking up at all those pins hanging over my head, all I could think of was what would happen in here if there was a major earthquake, shaking them all loose? I think that also contributed to the amount of sweat in the sweatbox . . . at least from me.

(I would later find out that Joe Barbera was also a master at push-pins; he could shoot one at someone’s foot as they were walking away and stick it into the sole of their shoe.)

Another of Walt’s little tricks was to stroll into somebody’s office and peer over their shoulder at their work, and say something like, “It looks good to me.” He would then turn and start to walk out, but suddenly stop and say, “Oh, by the way, have you seen what so-and-so is doing with his scene? It’s just absolutely outstanding, extraordinary stuff!” Then he’d leave. Knowing that all of his top people had egos in varying degrees, this was his technique for motivating them and getting the absolute best he could get out of everyone. When Walt began turning his attention to theme parks, live-action films, and television in the mid-1950s, I think a lot of the staff missed this kind of interaction and input.

Still another one of his techniques was one that I adopted myself years later at Hanna-Barbera, and that was the practice of bringing in artists of a different bent to work with, and hopefully influence, the staff. Thomas Hart Benton was among the noted fine artists who passed through the Burbank lot for this reason. For my part, I would have people like Cornelius “Corny” Cole, a very distinctive animation artist, come through the Hanna-Barbera studio for an assignment. Even if I couldn’t use the art he produced, I always made sure it was displayed on the walls so the other staffers could wander past and maybe pick something up from it.

The most notable of our visiting artists at Disney’s was Salvador Dali, who Walt had brought to the studio to work on a short film project in the mid-1940s. That film was never completed in Walt or Dali’s lifetimes (though more than fifty years later it was finished by John Hensch, who had worked directly with Dali in the forties, and Roy E. Disney, Walt’s nephew, and released in 2003 as *Destino*), but those of us on staff got a daily performance. Dali carried on his role as *the Artiste* the entire time he was there. The first time he had been presented with animation paper to draw on, he stared at its

three peg holes and then declared: "I can't draw on this! It already has a design on it!" Each day, just at five o'clock, he would come down the elevator of the animation building, dressed as always in a black suit, white shirt and tie, with a fresh red boutonnière, which he would dramatically pull out and stick his nose into, then stroll down the hallway and outside to a limousine that was waiting for him. This was his end-of-day routine, and it never varied.

Another well-known artist (though not as renowned as Dali) who came through the studio was the English pen-and-ink artist Ronald Searle, who was a marvelous draftsman with a very distinctive style. It was not necessarily his style that influenced those of us at the studio, however (though Marc Davis and a layout artist named Tom Oreb, who was very much into the modern, angular graphic style, were extremely taken with his work), but the fact that he used a Mont Blanc fountain pen to draw with. Even back then Mont Blanc's were luxury items, but they work extremely well for drawing. You can turn the nib upside-down for a very thin line, and right-side up for a bolder one. I think the majority of D-Wing rushed right out and bought Mont Blanc pens.

I still have two of them.

MILT

Milt Kahl was only about a dozen or so years older than I was, but when I started working with him in the 1940s, it seemed like he had the wisdom of the ages. He also had an enormous amount of talent as an artist, and a lot of what might today be termed “attitude.” Milt had very little patience for people who he felt were not working hard enough to achieve their best. Because of that, and because he felt there was no excuse for not achieving one’s best, he developed a reputation for being an ogre. But he was not a mean person by any stretch of the imagination; in fact, if he felt that you had developed your talent to a point where it was genuinely as good as you could do for that period of your life he could be extremely sympathetic and helpful.

There was something special about the way Milt animated, which had to do with his ability to create very impressive drawings. His drawings weren’t worked over or sketchy, there wasn’t anything labored about them. He just sat down and did it. There was another animator at Disney’s named David Michener, who was the nephew of James A. Michener, the famous author. David summed it up best one time when he told Milt: “You always seem to be able to do one thing: if you get yourself backed into a corner, you can draw yourself out of it.”

Of course, drawing is not the only important element of animation. There is also thinking. For *Ichabod and Mr. Toad*, which was a two-part film consisting of “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “The Wind in the Willows,” Milt was animating “Brom Bones,” the antagonist of the “Sleepy Hollow” segment, and also “Katrina,” the love interest. One particular shot of Brom was giving Milt a very hard time, and he explained why to me. “Here’s a character who is supposed to be very strong, very masculine, so much so that he is going to be drinking straight out of this big keg,” Milt said. “Now, if I have him take that keg in just one arm and bring it up and start drinking out of it, it looks

too easy. The keg wouldn't look full and it wouldn't be impressive at all. On the other hand, if I give the keg too much weight, and show him struggling to lift it, then Brom wouldn't look and feel strong." This was just one little bit of business in a scene that, to some other animator, particularly a non-Disney animator, might not have been worth worrying about. But here was Milt struggling to discover just the right way of handling it so that it clearly supported the character. It was a great lesson in animation. I realized that this was the type of thinking that animators like the Nine Old Men were talking about when they said things like, "It takes a year or two years to learn to animate, but it takes ten years to make an animator."

Another example of Milt's creativity occurred in a scene from *Cinderella*, for which he animated the "King," the "Grand Duke," and the "Fairy Godmother." There was one long dialogue scene between the King and the Duke where Milt ran out of things for them to do. The scene did not call for a lot of pacing around, so he had to figure out a way to keep the characters alive and active, while not making arbitrary movements like shrugging or hand gestures. What he ended up doing was having the Grand Duke, whose design included a monocle, remove the monocle from his eye and place it on the back of his hand, and then start rolling it back and forth across his fingers like a sleight-of-hand artist. It was a very clever touch that worked for the scene, and which could only have been achieved by that kind of thinking animator. As such it impressed me greatly and challenged me to begin to assimilate what character animation was really about, and define it as being a string of choices that come out of the animator's head, rather than simply propelling a character around through a series of stock or standard gestures.

Cinderella, which came out in 1950, was Disney's first full-length animated feature in eight years. During the war, and for several years afterward, the studio released only live-action and animation combinations, like *Song of the South*, or compilations like *Melody Time* and *Make Mine Music*. Since Disney's was now ramping up for full feature production on a film that had a mostly human cast, and did not have a lot of money to spend, the studio fell back on a process called rotoscoping, in which live-action images are used as a foundation to create a scene of animation. The process had been around since the 1920s and had been used by Disney before as far back as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the studio's first feature.

The way Disney did it was to have many of the scenes shot in live action first, on very simple sets, with actors wearing costumes that resembled the animation designs. Some of these background films featured highly professional casts. For *Alice in Wonderland*, Ed Wynn and Jerry Colona acted in the

study footage as well as providing voices, while the study cast of *Peter Pan* included Hans Conried, comedian Billy House, an MGM dancer named Roland Dupree, Margaret Kerry, Henry Brandon, June Foray, and Buddy Ebsen, who acted out the part of dancing pirate. Once this footage was shot, each frame of film would be enlarged and printed as photostats, which the key animators would use as pose guides to make their extremes. It was up to each animator to decide how extensively to use the live action and how close to remain to it. For female characters, they often stayed truer to the rotoscopes, particularly for timing, action patterns, and gestures—head tilts and the like—which was only natural since male animators would have less of a feel for exactly how a female would move for a given action.

All of the human characters in *Cinderella* were rotoed, particularly Cinderella herself, though it still took a high degree of artistic ability to bring it off. While some other studios that employed the rotoscope technique simply had the animators trace overtop of the photostats, we never did that, because results are invariably unrealistic, stiff and jerky (the “Gulliver” character in Max Fleischer’s *Gulliver’s Travels* is a good example of woodenness). Plus, the designs of the characters were totally inconsistent with the proportions of the live-action characters. If you literally put the characters over the photostats, their eyelines would sit where their chins were. Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston’s approach to rotoscoping was to study the hell out of the footage and then do it all from scratch.

Ken O’Brien was the one who did quality control for the character of Cinderella. He had been a student of that Famous Artists correspondence course which had been set up by illustrator Albert Dorne from a small town in Connecticut, where a lot of the top illustrators and artists of the mid-twentieth century—people like Norman Rockwell, Milton Caniff, Al Capp, and Vip Partch—would critique work that was sent in through the mail. A lot of artists tended to turn up their noses at that course, but the truth was, it turned out a lot of excellent students. Ken had studied under John Whitcomb at Famous Artists, and he used what he learned to give a lecture to the staff animators working on *Cinderella* as to how to draw a pretty woman.

Milt, however, always tended to turn his back on rotoscoping. It was a source of pride for him that he could animate from scratch and didn’t have to lean on the rotoscoping. Years later, long after I had left the Disney studio, I heard that Milt was still on that particular crusade. In the 1977 film *The Rescuers*, which was the last Disney film to feature the core of the Nine Old Men as directing animators, Milt had animated the character of the villainess, “Mme. Medusa.” One of her scenes was filled with the kind of physical business that

Milt loved: it showed Medusa sitting in front of a make-up mirror, putting on false eyelashes, while delivering her dialogue. Milt proudly claimed that he had not resorted to using rotoscoping techniques for that scene for any of his animation.

In the years that I worked with him, though, I discovered that those times when he was experiencing frustration with the way a particular scene was going, or when he was trying for a certain effect or character emotion that he just was not able to achieve, could be almost as entertaining as his finished animation. Milt would take his frustration out on his paper and pencil. Sheets of animation paper have holes in them which are set down on pegs on the drawing table, and in this way all of the animation drawings line up in the proper place on the page. Usually when an animator is finished with one drawing, he carefully lifts the sheet off the pegs and then places down a fresh one. Even if one is dissatisfied with the drawing, the sheet is usually carefully lifted off the table and then discarded.

But with Milt, once frustration began to set in, the violence of his actions would escalate. He would rip the sheet off the pegs and crumple them up before slamming them in the wastebasket. Then he would take his pencils and furiously wind the handle of the pencil sharpener like he was trying to start a Model T. Before long, he would feed in whole pencils just so they could be chewed up into sawdust and graphite powder. Whenever I heard one of these episodes of destruction going on in Milt's office I would have a hard time containing myself. I would start laughing like crazy and become almost hysterical, and for some reason, that always seemed to calm him down a little bit, and he would realize how ridiculous it was for a grown man to be acting this way.

Milt's moods were acknowledged and tolerated all the way up to the top office. One of his passions was chess, and he used to play regularly with an animator named Amby Paliwoda and a director named Jack Hannah, but the games would often be carried out over the phone. These would go on three, sometimes four times a week. The phone would ring and it would be Jack, saying, "Knight to king," and the game would go on.

Others at the studio learned that the outcome of these games directly impacted Milt's approachability. Every now and then Milt's phone would ring after lunch, while he was still out, and I would answer it to find Walt on the other end of the line. He'd say, "Uh, did he win?" If I replied, "No, I don't think so," Walt would say, "Well, I'll call him tomorrow." If, however, I'd report that Milt had had a good day of chess, Walt would say, "Tell him to call me when he gets back in, will you?"

Milt had other long-term passions as well, primarily fly fishing and, well, *passion*. He spent as much time fly fishing as he could, and as much time in the other pursuit as he could get away with. One time he proudly came into the room and announced: "You know, they sent this questionnaire to us and they ask all sorts of odd things, including our hobbies. What do you write for something like that?" He got a grin on his face and went on: "I wrote down 'fly fishing' and 'sexual intercourse.'" He was quite proud of that, though I doubt the publicity department ever used the information.

Milt was never one to hold back much. One time Clyde "Gerry" Geronomi, a longtime studio employee who was then directing sequences of *Sleeping Beauty*, showed Milt and me a sequence from the picture where the evil "Maleficent" is chewing out her goons, and they're all babbling behind her. The scene had some problems and Milt knew it, but he didn't have much to say about it. He sat there quietly watching, and after it was over, went back to his office. But before long, he picked up the phone and said, "Gerry? That was a piece of shit!" (This was a typical Milt Kahl critique.) "Send the goddamned scenes down to me and I'll fix 'em." Gerry, who was a very practical kind of director and a man who lacked the kind of ego that Milt had, readily agreed and sent the scenes down, and Milt did fix it, turning it into something very entertaining and very funny.

Other times, animators would appear in the office because their directors would have suggested that they come down and have Milt check some of their drawings. They'd slink in apologetically and say, "Oh, are you too busy?" hoping he would say, "Yeah, come back later." But if he was not busy, he would put their drawings down on the pegs, look at them, and say, "Take the goddamned thing back and work on it more! You are not working hard enough, goddamnit! We don't draw like this here!" He was always a stickler for effort. The truth was Milt had to work a lot harder to achieve exactly what he wanted, as opposed to someone like Marc Davis, who was incredibly facile, but when he arrived at what he wanted it was pretty spectacular. Frank Thomas may have summed him up best: "Ninety percent of the time Milt is dead on, he is so good and so right," Frank would say. "But ten percent of the time he's wrong, and boy, when he's wrong, is he *ever* wrong!" That was Milt; he did nothing halfway, even err.

While I was learning the art of animation from the likes of Milt, Marc Davis, and some of the other Old Men, I was enhancing my knowledge in other areas as well. I learned a great deal from John Freeman, though not so much in terms of the actual animation career, but as far as maturing as an individual. At that point I was still in my early twenties and had been born and

raised in a very insulated area, prior to being sent away to an even more insulated camp. I credit John with helping me to grow up, in a sense, and through friends of his who were from San Francisco I also started to learn about something called fine wine.

During the 1940s California was starting to develop its burgeoning wine industry, though most people's knowledge of it, at least in the southern part of the state, began and ended with Gallo. San Francisco society seemed well advanced in the knowledge of wines at that time, and I grew to love ordering wines in restaurants by name because there were so few people in Los Angeles who knew enough to do it. Like most people, I started off with Chablis, but just sitting around and talking about Chablis was, to my mind, cool.

When I use terms like "grown up" or "adult," they are perhaps not the best way to describe the daily activities of an animation studio, particularly the Walt Disney Studios of the 1940s and 1950s. I don't think it's a secret that animation people by nature love to play practical jokes on one another, and the more devious the better. Sometimes just sophomoric gags will do, like the venerable hotfoot, or placing a film can filled with water on top of a half-open doorway and then waiting for someone to swing the door all the way open. But often the jokes were more elaborate.

At Disney's they used to have these cabinet-style wardrobes that were very well-built closet-like structures, but completely movable. These were the places we hung our coats. One day Tom Oreb, who always used to wear a hat or a cap, which he would stow in the wardrobe cabinet, came walking in wearing a jacket. Somebody took this as an invitation to grab him and literally hang him by his jacket—which he was still wearing—inside the cabinet and then close the door, shutting him inside. Then a bunch of his co-workers turned the cabinet sideways, so he was lying down helpless inside, picked it up, and walked it to another wing of the animation building where the ink-and-paint women were working, and set it up there. I guess Tom stayed in there for a while before venturing out. When he finally he opened the door and looked out, he saw all these women staring at him. He nonchalantly tipped his hat to them, and walked out of the building as though this sort of thing happened every day.

Being on the small side myself, I was also treated to this peculiar form of transport once. But another gag that was made possible because of my size nearly got me killed!

One day when Milt was out of his office, I managed to wedge myself underneath his desk in such a way that I could not be seen, and then I waited for him to come back. When he did, he simply sat down and began to work, at

which point I grabbed both of his ankles. What I was not prepared for was his nearly kicking me unconscious. Frequently after such episodes as this I would go back to my office, satisfied with the success of my prank, and get back to work, but after a while I would suddenly feel these eyes boring into the back of my head. I would turn around and there would be Milt, leaning on the door in between our rooms, glaring at me. He'd say, "You know what your problem is?"

"What?" I'd ask.

"You've got no respect for your goddamned elders, you little shit!" Then he'd turn around and go back into his room. Of course, I did have a lot of respect for guys like Milt and Marc, but at times it was a lot more fun not to show it.

In addition to chess, Milt used to play pinochle with an animator named Al Bertino, who would show up in Milt's office about a half hour before quitting time in the afternoon and start up a game. Just listening to the two of them as they played was hilarious. I don't think they were trying to be funny but they would carry on this inane conversation that had some of the funniest dialogue I had ever heard. A fellow named Clark Mallory, who was Eric Larsen's assistant, had gotten a hold of one of the very first tape recorders, which was this oversized and cumbersome piece of machinery. We put that up in our room. Now, Milt's desk was on the opposite side of the wall that separated our rooms, so it was a perfect place for us to drill a hole and slide the wire for that tape recorder into his room so we could bug it. We affixed the microphone under one of the drawers in the animation desk, and we recorded this ridiculous discourse that used to go on between him and Al.

Some time later, we invited quite a number of animators up with the promise of hearing a special project we had been working on, and all of them showed up, including Bertino and Milt. We put on that tape and treated everyone to an uninhibited performance of Al and Milt cursing like drunken sailors and carrying on without realizing they were being recorded.

Bertino was also involved with one of the best gags that was ever pulled while I was at Disney's. Al was in the bathroom one day, tending to his business in one of the stalls, when Milt walked in. Recognizing the shoes underneath the door as Al's, Milt went over to the waste basket where all the used paper towels had been pitched, picked it up, and dumped it over the stall door and on Bertino's head, and then just walked out.

Even though Al couldn't see his assailant's face, he had a pretty good idea who it was. So he waited until lunchtime and then went to as many people as he could find who brown-bagged their lunches, and took all of their leftover

half-eaten sandwiches, banana peels, apple cores, and orange peels, and whatever else he could get, and put them all into a wastepaper basket. Al walked over to Milt's office and threw the garbage all over his floor, and then walked out. Milt, though, was concentrating on a scene and didn't pay any attention. But John Freeman was paying attention, and he decided that this was just too good a gag to let die, and that we should do something to keep it going.

John called up the Disney publicity department and talked them into giving Milt a ring and telling him that Ingrid Bergman, who at that time was one of the biggest movie stars in the world, was shortly going to be arriving at the studio and that she was a big fan of animation. As far as any of us knew, she might have loathed animation, but that didn't matter; it was all part of the prank. Publicity further told Milt that Bergman had specifically requested to see him, since he was not only one of the top animators at the studio, but was of Scandinavian descent, as was Bergman. They finished by saying that they would greatly appreciate it if they could bring her by his office in fifteen minutes. Milt said, "Of course," and hung up the phone. Suddenly he looked around his office, which still had garbage strewn all over the floor and panicked. He leapt up and went tearing down to Bertino's office, took him by the scruff of the neck, and physically dragged him back to his room, crying: "You clean this goddamned thing up!"

So Bertino is down on his hands and knees and he's picking everything up, making the place look spotless for the arrival of Ingrid Bergman, who, of course, is not going to show up, and who, for all we knew, was not even in the country. As Al is doing this, he's repeating over and over and over again: "Goddamn you, Freeman! . . . Goddamn you, Freeman!"

Of course, Milt was not the only one we picked on. We had a new fellow start as an inbetweenner one time, and decided to "help" him with his light board. After this fellow left work one evening, we attached a blinker mechanism used in Christmas lights—the kind that make the lights flash on and off—to his light bulb. When he came in the next morning, he turned on his light and reached for a piece of paper and put it on the pegs. Before he could start drawing, the light went off. Then it came on again. Every time he would begin to work, the light would go dark, then come back. Instead of trying to figure out why this was happening, the guy just went along with it. When the light was on he would draw frantically until it went out, and then wait patiently until it came back on. We had a marvelous time watching him.

Another episode in which I was involved was not strictly speaking a practical joke, but it demonstrates how hard we were on the physical plant we were working in. One of our animators, Volus Jones was, in addition to being a

terrific artist, a master archer. It was said that he one time competed against Howard Hill, who was regarded as the best archer in the world, or at least in the United States. Hill was the man who did all the trick arrow hits in the Errol Flynn movie *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, including actually splitting an arrow. As the story goes, Volus actually won the competition against Hill!

Volus got a bunch of us interested in the bow and arrow. We would practice outdoors on the lot, and I became quite proud of the fact that I could effortlessly pull a fifty-pound bow back. Then I decided that I wanted to see just how much force the bow would create. One day during the lunch hour I took a target arrow and removed the point from it, and went back inside the animation building and down to another wing, where at the end of the hallway stood these diagonal doors. The same kinds of doors were also in D-Wing, but I guess I assumed I had less of a chance of getting caught elsewhere. After making sure the hallway was empty, I stood down at one end of the hallway, aimed the tip-less arrow at the door, pulled the bow, and let fly. The arrow embedded itself into the door.

That was when I broke into a cold sweat, because I suddenly realized that if there had been someone in the room on the other side of the doors who had opened them just as I let fly, he or she would probably not have just gotten back up and dusted themselves off upon hearing *Cut!*, like they did in *Robin Hood*. There would have been hell to pay.

Fortunately, no one saw me, so I ran down to the door and pulled out the arrow, and saw that it left a nice, neat hole in the door. Exercising my creativity, I ran and got some pastels and a kneaded eraser, and quickly matched the color of the door on the eraser with the pastels. Then I jammed a piece of it into the hole to fill it. To this day, I have no idea if anybody ever noticed.

For all I know, that plug might still be there.

TALES FROM D-WING, AND ALL THAT JAZZ

Drawing was, of course, our primary activity at the Walt Disney Studios, but there were plenty of other things that occupied our attention. In the case of Ward Kimball, his distraction became music. Ward used to have a set of drums in his assistant's room, and there were several guys who were totally hung up on New Orleans jazz. Clark Mallory, with whom I had perpetrated the tape-recording gag on Milt and Al Bertino, was one of them. They would gather around maybe twice a week and just blow jazz, eventually becoming known even outside of the studio as the Firehouse Five Plus Two. Ward had somehow acquired this fire engine from the mid-1920s and fixed it up and painted it, and then got a hold of firemen's hats and talked his bandmates into buying black slacks, red shirts, and white suspenders, and with the firemen's hats they were off and blowing. They would often play concerts for charity.

One time the Firehouse Five Plus Two even played the Mocambo, the famous Hollywood nightclub. I don't know how Ward fixed it up, but he got the Mocambo to open on Monday night, which like most clubs was its usual "dark" night. John Freeman and I attended that night, mainly because Ward wanted somebody who had cameras and some idea of how to photograph things. I had helped John set up a darkroom in his garage, having decided that we should know something about photography since we were in the film business. With his flair for showmanship, Ward and his band had piled into his fire engine and they came rolling up Sunset Boulevard, playing New Orleans jazz—or at least their version of New Orleans jazz—for a crowd of Hollywood celebrities, who had shown up to see them. They played for the entire evening, and my best memory from that night is that of watching Ginger Rogers and Ann Miller do the Charleston.

I was developing quite an interest in jazz myself around this time. I had a

friend whose sister had married a fellow whose job it was to go around and take photographs in nightclubs in Los Angeles. Through them I became familiar with one in south Los Angeles (which was where most of the good jazz clubs were) called the Plantation Club, which was set up inside an old, huge house. They used to bring in some of the top people at that time, such as Count Basie. Through my friend I had access to the backstage area, where we would hang out while his brother-in-law was developing his film and processing the prints. I was able to get to know some of the members of Basie's band, like blues singers Jimmy Rushing and Jimmy Witherspoon, and that gave me exposure to the kind of Big Band music that I, as we used to say, dug. I had grown somewhat tired of the Glenn Miller-type of Big Band sound during the war.

There was another place on Beverly Boulevard around Normandie called the Beverly Cavern, whose owner had gone down to New Orleans and found musicians who had played for people like King Oliver, and he talked them into coming out to Los Angeles to be recorded and play at the club. One of the groups he brought up was headed by Kid Ory, who used to hold court at the Cavern, which quickly became something of a hangout for me, as was a nearby record store that covered quite a range of jazz, including some of the then-new stuff that was beginning to develop out of New York, like bebop. I acquired a collection of 78s there.

Then through John Freeman I met some people from San Francisco who were knowledgeable in regard to the traditions in the New Orleans Jazz idiom. This group of people, along with Ward's group, became a whole circle of acquaintances, and they would invite people over to their homes on Sunday afternoons for jam sessions. Joining them would be real musicians (as opposed to Ward and his crew), such as Zooty Singleton, whom I met at one of these soirees. I was able to share my enthusiasm for the New York-style jazz with this group, who were far more rooted in the traditional jazz form.

Through another friend, Ed Hearnfeldt, who was a photographer for high-fashion magazines like *Vogue*, I got to know Albert Nicholas. Like virtually everyone who has "N-i-c-o-l" in their last name, Albert went by "Nick." He was considered one of the top New Orleans-style jazz clarinetists of the time, and he had played with Ory. Ed had his photography studio overtop of an Italian restaurant in the Wilshire District, and I always loved visiting just for the smell! He decided he was going to take Nick and drive up to San Francisco, because Nick wanted to meet a piano player from New York, who was performing up there, and I managed to go along. It was quite an enlightening trip, listening to Nick stories of playing clubs during prohibition, where

they would frantically empty the liquor bottles into the toilets because they were just about to be raided by federal agents. Once the evidence was gone, they invited the feds in and shared some “Turkish cigarettes” with them. In reality, these were reefers, which they kept in round Lucky Strike cans, but the agents were only interested in alcohol; they didn’t know anything about marijuana. Nick told us how much fun it was to watch them getting high without having any idea what was happening.

The club we were going to was located in Sausalito, near San Francisco, where Nick was going to jam with this piano player, whose name I can no longer recall. The place was so crowded, Ed and I had no way of getting in, so we stood outside and listened through an open window. Whenever we wanted a beer, we would order it and the crowd would pass it over their heads and out the window.

While we were up there, Ed and I stayed with a fellow who was a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and his wife, and we went to this curry house where the bartender served something called “The Maharajah’s Bouripeg.” What it contained, or even how it was supposed to be spelled, I really have no idea, but the name has stayed with me all these years later. What I do remember is it was served in a huge goblet, and the bartender said, “You guys better share it.” So we had three straws and all drank out of the one goblet, and by the time we were finished, we were all soused. Then our friend the reporter said, “You know, I gotta go check the police blotter and see if anything’s going on.” He stood up and staggered outside the place, wove his way down the street to the police station, and disappeared inside. I guess they were used to seeing him there in that condition.

In those days I was also keeping in contact with Victor Takahashi, my old cohort in wartime Utah exploits, who was also a fan of jazz. He was then living in Manhattan. He was the one who clued me in to the beginnings of the cool jazz period when I was still a devotee of the New Orleans style. In one of his letters, he told me about a young singer who was not too well known outside of New York, and said, “You must meet her if she ever gets to town.” Not too long after that, she did come to town and sang at a place called the Lincoln Theater, which was at Twenty-third Street and Central. It was a movie theater, but this was during the time when they would stage live performances in between double features. This young lady was appearing with a back-up band headed by Lucky Tompkins, who also happened to be one of the managers of the Light-Heavyweight champion Archie Moore. I went and was hugely impressed by her. Her name was Sarah Vaughan.

For a time, Hollywood proper became quite a jazz hangout. There was a

place called the Empire Room right around the Hollywood and Vine area that once hosted the Duke Ellington Orchestra. Another place was called the Jazz Suite, which was located in the old Romanoff's restaurant further west on the Sunset Strip. It had a fine-dining restaurant, bar, and mainstream jazz room downstairs where people like Stan Kenton played, as well as a much more intimate room upstairs where one could grab a hamburger and listen to small groups and combos play. It was a membership-only club that catered to the entertainment industry (I remember seeing the actor Gene Barry there frequently), but it did not last long. The support from Hollywood seemed to dry up after only a few months, and the fact that they did not extend the membership outside of Hollywood seems to have sealed its fate.

Even though I had an appreciation for music, I've always regretted not having a better knowledge of how to read music. It's not that I think I could have become the next Count Basie in terms of playing—or even Ward Kimball, for that matter—but I wish I had learned more about the time structure of music, that sort of mathematical structure that it has, because that would have been extremely helpful in timing animation. The noted animator and director Richard Williams, for instance, was a musicologist, and Bill Hanna relied hugely on musical principals using a metronome for timing. Nick Nichols, whom I worked with extensively both at Disney's and later at Hanna-Barbera, also sometimes used a metronome when he timed out the action.

Even more so than music, though, my spare-time activities centered around sports. Virtually every noon hour during the summer, a group of us would be out on this large, beautiful lawn next to the commissary at the intersection of what they called "Dopey Drive" and "Mickey Avenue" (the streets inside the Disney studio still retain these kinds of names). When football season started, we would shift over to touch football games on the same field. It started as an informal sort of thing, but it caught on. They even had a locker room downstairs in one of the buildings where you could change and take a shower. There was a time when, after the games, I used to hang out there for a couple hours talking to Roy Disney Jr., who was a few years younger than I was and just getting started at the studio. At that time we both owned Austin Healy automobiles, and we used to sit around and compare notes as to the last thing we did with our cars. Roy, for instance, would talk about driving all the way out to the Santa Monica Mountains without once hitting the brakes, just using the gears. I was never called in and reprimanded for all the time I spent down there for obvious reasons: it helps when your companion's last name is Disney.

Sports were quite prevalent at Disney's during the noon hour. We used to gather quite a crowd of people, a whole slew of animators who would brown bag their lunches and come out to watch us play. At least in the beginning I thought that was why they were there. I came to learn that they were sitting out there in order to watch the parade of the ink-and-paint girls going back and forth for their after-lunch stroll and that our athletic efforts were hardly the main attraction.

One person who desperately wanted to join in on our games was the child actor Bobby Driscoll, who was under contract to Disney in the late 1940s. He would be sitting out there watching us, and he wanted so badly to come out and play with us, but he was forbidden to by his mother, who feared that he would become injured. I don't think the poor kid was ever allowed to be a little boy. Bobby went on to win a special juvenile Oscar but ended up dying at a very young age.

Injuries, however, were not unheard of in our informal catch-and-run games. One day someone hit a pop fly and I got under it, but during the catch I managed to get my thumb in the wrong position and the ball smacked it and dislocated it. I looked down and saw my crooked right thumb, and immediately walked over to the closest person, who was Andy Engstrom, a former animator who had become the Disney Studios personnel director. Andy was a nice man, but he had a rather rigid and uncompromising Scandinavian disposition—the very opposite of the stereotypical animation joker or prankster—and because of that he was the brunt of a lot of comments from others at the studio. It was very rare that he joined in to play with us, but that day he was there. I said, "Hey, Andy, would you do me a favor?" He said, "Oh, sure, yeah." I thrust my crooked white thumb toward him and said, "Pull that for me, would you?" Andy turned the color of animation paper, but he finally worked himself up into doing it and popping my thumb back into place.

Later the studio nurse insisted I go across the street to the hospital for an X-ray, to make sure there were no broken or chipped bones, which there weren't. But my thumb was effectively out of commission for practically a year, which made drawing quite a challenge. I learned to draw while anchoring the pencil against my palm, with my thumb totally extended outward, and I actually became quite adept at it. Then when my hand was fully healed, it took me another year to learn to use my thumb to draw again!

For a while, though, the games became very serious, and all because of a celebrity sports figure named Doyle Nave. He was a third-string quarterback for USC back in the late thirties, and he played in the 1939 Rose Bowl against

Duke University. Duke that year was undefeated, and was just about to continue that record, when in the last few minutes of the game the coach put in Nave, who went on to complete a series of passes to a receiver named Al Krueger. As a result, USC scored a touchdown and won the game, and Nave and Krueger became heroes.

What has this to do with the Disney Studios? After graduation, Doyle needed a job. One of his biggest supporters had been the *Los Angeles Times* sportswriter Braven Dyer, whose brother happened to be Bonar Dyer, who was very high up in the corporate hierarchy of Disney's, just under Walt and Roy Sr. Bonar hired Doyle and stuck him in the editorial department. But it was our lunchtime sports activities where he really began to throw his weight around. Doyle made the studio put in a new backstop and bases, buy equipment and uniforms, and turn us into a bona fide softball team and play in an industrial league. He even managed to get some ringers on the team. As a result, we won our sectional division and were invited to participate in the National Softball Finals in Arizona. I wasn't able to go because I had a very heavy schedule (and I was, after all, required to work at the studio as well as play softball and perpetrate practical jokes), but the team went without me and managed to lose the first game. They soon came back home.

Frankly, I did not have that much fun playing on Doyle's team. Things were treated so damned seriously that it ended up defeating the purpose. Some time later we organized a second team and joined a league that was of a much lesser level. We still had our own uniforms, but this one was a lot more fun. On that team Roy Disney Jr. was our shortstop (and his girlfriend and future wife, Patty, was our official car key holder), and the other players included Volus Jones, Ken Monday, Sam Horta, who worked in editorial, and a writer named Bill Banta. We just went out and had a helluva lot of fun without worrying about our league standing.

Our makeshift baseball field also doubled as an even more makeshift landing area for a helicopter that Woolie Reitherman, who had previously been an airline pilot in South America, used to fly. You can truly say that Disney's in its heyday was a place where creativity fell down from the sky.

Every now and then my heritage itself would get me assigned to some sort of extracurricular activity at the studio. I was once dispatched to the recording stage in order to offer what help I could to Winston Hibler, who was then responsible for a series of documentaries the studio was making, which were often on nature or wildlife subjects. Many of these were produced and written by Winston, who also dabbled in writing animated projects and song

lyrics, and nearly all of them were narrated by him. Having been a Broadway actor at one time, Winston had a good voice and a natural delivery—in English, that is.

In this particular instance, Winston was working on a film that had to do with a Japanese soldier, one of the rare ones who surrendered during the war. The script had him calling across a river to his fellow soldiers telling them that it was all right to surrender, that the Americans were not there to immediately begin torturing or killing them, as they had been led to believe. This dialogue was not part of Winston's narration, but one of the character lines that he would also be required to throw in when the occasion arose. The problem was that the line had to be read in Japanese.

It's no secret that the American ear has a strange idea of Japanese sounds. Americans don't quite understand the phonetics of the language. This is sometimes apparent in English-language dubs of Japanese films. Even though I was not as fluent in Japanese as someone who had been born and schooled there, I was probably the most fluent of anyone else at the studio. So I was asked to go and make sure that Winston at least got close to a correct pronunciation. As I listened to him, I could tell it was not going to be easy: Winston's Japanese dialect was pretty bad, and he just couldn't get the proper reading. I kept trying to correct him and managed to get him to the point where a Japanese speaker could at least understand him.

In the meantime, a fellow named Yusaku "Steve" Nakagawa showed up on a similar mission. Steve had come over to Disney's from Daiei Studios in Japan to learn how to sophisticate the business of making animated films back home, a process he felt was much too crude. He showed up with a letter from one of his studio's executives addressed to Roy Disney Sr., and he was put on staff as a courtesy to the foreign studio.

Again, since I was virtually the lone Japanese on staff at Disney's at that time (though in time I would be joined by an artist named Willie Ito), Steve had been assigned to me, and he immediately began treating me like a *sensei*, or teacher. He had stepped into my room, his hair closely cropped in the Japanese fashion, and he gave me that crisp, formal bow that native Japanese use when greeting a superior. (Steve would go on to become a very close friend of another artist name Bob Ogle; so close, in fact, that Bob used to claim that they would both have the same dreams. They were true soulmates.)

When Steve walked in and listened to Winston fracturing the Japanese language, he fell on the floor laughing. Steve took over and got him to do it over and over again, until Winston finally got fed up with it. After a good dozen tries he said, "Oh, let's use the last one, it's good enough!" It wasn't,

really, but it was the closest he could get. And I don't recall hearing about any letters of complaint from Japanese audience members.

As I entered my second decade with the studio, my career path took another turn. I had been working as a direct assistant to some of Disney's top animators, and even though I had gotten to the point where I had an assistant of my own, I was never allowed the chance to become a full animator there. A new feature film would start to ramp up and it would look like I would get an opportunity to animate, and suddenly I would be approached by a small committee usually consisting of Milt Kahl, Marc Davis, and Frank Thomas, who would say something like, "For the good of the picture, would you take on the responsibility of quality control in the lead characters?" That would be the end of my animation chance.

Over the years I contributed some footage here and there, but never enough to the point where I would get screen credit (and in those days, functions such as quality control did not get credited; today it would). For example, I was allowed to animate a couple hundred feet of a scene for *Sleeping Beauty* by Eric Larson, who was one of the sequence directors on the film. It was the tail end of the initial meeting scene between Princess Aurora and Prince Phillip, in which she turns away from him and runs over a little stream, then turns back as he asks her when he will see her again. "Maybe someday," she answers, and runs off. As scenes go it was nothing earth-shaking, but Eric nonetheless managed to turn it into a valuable learning experience for me. He called me up to review the scene and we looked at it in its rough pencil test form (which is the drawn animation filmed, before being finalized in ink and paint) a couple of times. Then he sat and thought about it for a minute or two, and then he wound it back to the point where she stops and replies to the prince and said, "Is it possible before she delivers her line, that you could insert about eight frames of inbetweens? That will make the scene complete." Of course it was possible, but I did not really know why until he told me. "It would be nice to have her think before she replies," he said.

Despite the fact that I was continuing to learn more and more about what constituted good animation, I did not get much opportunity to put the knowledge into practice before going into quality control. The first film on which I was asked to take over quality control on a character was *Lady and the Tramp*. It was for the character of Lady, the female dog love interest. What happened was that Walt had been shown some of the early footage on the film, and everything seemed fine—except for Milt's disposition. When he came back to the office after meeting with Walt, he was grumbling and grouching about something.

"Dammit, he always likes what I do!" Milt complained, clearly stung. It seems that Walt had told him that Lady did not look feminine enough. "I really don't know what the hell's going to make her look more feminine!" he said. This went on for about fifteen minutes, with Milt sitting there drawing this, that, and the other thing to make Lady look more like a lady, while I was standing over his shoulder, looking at his attempts. Finally, I said: "You know those fluffy ears you designed on her, why don't you do something like exaggerate the hair in a way that goes in the direction of Veronica Lake?"

"What are you talking about?" he demanded, but in the meantime, he began drawing it out. "You know something?" he said, finally, "I think you're right." It was really just a matter of modification of what was already there. But Milt took all the sheets off his pegs and hands them over to me. "You do it," he instructed. So I did it, and after he saw what I was doing, he said: "You'd better just take control of her and make sure she looks that way throughout the picture." What that meant was that I would from then on be watching over what all the other animators were doing, hence the quality control aspect of it. Scenes animated by people other than those in D-Wing would be sent down, or else the assistants for those animators would bring them in, and I would point out problems to them or draw over a few key things to give them an idea of what could be done to bring them onto model. Occasionally I would end up doing a little bit of reanimation myself.

John Freeman, who was taking on the quality control duties for the Tramp, warned me in advance that I was going to have to be very diplomatic in my dealings with some of these veteran animators, a lot of whom were old-timers out of New York. I was still a young guy in my twenties, and here I was instructing and correcting some artists who were old enough to be my father! I was prepared to do whatever was necessary to stay in their good graces as I put a fresh piece of paper over their drawing and made a correction on the stuff that they had done. It was certainly not the easiest or most comfortable task in the world, but I don't remember hearing any specific grumbles from the others about this, though they did extract a measure of revenge in a unique way.

Bud Partch came in with some drawings for me to examine, and instead of laying a whole new sheet over top and redrawing, I just needed to erase some of his lines and redo them. But someone had anticipated this and had sprayed the drawings with fixative. I wore the eraser down to nothing, but none of the lines were budging. I think I finally wore a hole right through the paper before I was let in on the gag.

CHANGES

As the 1950s progressed, the Disney studios were pulled in many different directions, and even the Disney physical plant was changing and expanding rapidly. Walt was erecting live-action soundstages and creating a backlot, which included such permanent sets as a downtown street, which he used in many contemporary films, and an old Spanish town at the very back of the lot that was the set for the *Zorro* television series. He also built a good-sized circular pool in order to test a miniature model of the submarine ride he was developing for Disneyland.

One of the new soundstages was leased out to Jack Webb, who filmed *Dragnet* there. One time Webb needed sketches for a scene in the show . . . and guess who got called in on it? There were a couple of us working on these sketches, the nature of which I can no longer recall, and when we were finished we went over to the stage to show them to Webb. As we walked in he was all over the set, because he directed the shows as well as starred in them, and when he spotted us, he said, "Oh, are these the *artistes*?" Try to imagine Joe Friday saying "*artistes*!"

The nonstop building that was going on turned out to be a benefit for some of us on staff, including a background artist named Walt Peregoy. Walt was a fine art painter who seemed to be compulsive about art: he simply could not stop painting or drawing. But not being blessed with huge funds, he could not afford expensive art store canvases or pads, so he would use anything he found as a handy substitute. If you were visiting him, you dared not put anything down in front of him, because he would see blank space and immediately start drawing on it.

All of the scrap lumber and boards that were being left as trash from the construction was like a godsend to Peregoy, who would gather it all up and

use them to paint on. If a paint crew happened to leave a can of white paint or whitewash laying around, Walt would grab it up and use it in place of gesso.

John Freeman and I also benefited from the building of the soundstages. Among our sports activities was a growing passion for badminton. John and I, along with an artist named Bill Justice, who was a marvel at any game that involved a racquet, used to go over to a public park at Olive Street and Victory Boulevard in Burbank and play there. But one day Freeman said, "You know, those soundstages they're building are just standing there empty. We ought to take advantage of that and play badminton in there. I'm going to call Bonar Dyer and see whether he'd okay something like that." He got on the phone and called Dyer's office and managed to get through to him. After explaining his idea, Dyer exclaimed: "My wife and I love badminton!" That afternoon we walked into the empty soundstage and found lines for two courts already in place on the floor, two nets set up, a supply of birdies available, and an assortment of racquets. Bonar Dyer was prepared to play badminton at 6:00 that evening.

That was one of my first experiences at learning exactly what it must be like to be a top-of-the-line executive.

We were still making animated feature films, of course, and even though Milt stayed firmly rooted in animation, some of the Nine began to wander out of feature filmmaking. Marc Davis became busy with things over at the WED area, which was the division that had been created to build Disneyland. WED stood for "Walter Elias Disney"; today the division is called WDI—Walt Disney Imagineering. At the same time, Ward Kimball was doing some things for television. I believe that Ward in a sense took advantage of Walt's growing interest in live action during the early 1950s and of the fact that Walt was away from the studio much more than he had been previously. That is how he was able to produce things that Walt would have never been in favor of, such as *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom*, which he directed with Nick Nichols and which was drawn in that stark, modern UPA style that Walt tended to disparage.

One of the things that did get Walt's attention was his television deal with ABC. The network had put up an awful lot of money to back Disneyland, and my understanding of the agreement was that if Walt didn't pay it back in full at the end of the year, they would have a percentage of the park. Disneyland did so well that he had no trouble paying it back. Another part of the deal was that ABC would get a Disney television show. Walt used to literally rub his hands together and chortle as he discussed the TV arrangement. He crowed: "My god, I have this show, and they're *paying* me for this show, and what do I put on the show? *Footage of the park being built!*" He would also put in

clips of upcoming features, or entire hour shows built around the making of the films. What Walt had done was figure out a way to advertise himself and his company week after week on network television and get paid for it. That really delighted him. I wonder what he would make of the fact that today the Walt Disney Company owns ABC?

Of course, by this time, *The Mickey Mouse Club* was already a hit on television. My participation in the show was minimal, except for seeing hoards of kids suddenly running through the hallways of the buildings, and having frequent visits from the show's genial host Jimmie Dodd, who would stop by just to chat. And as if the noisy kids weren't bad enough, their mothers were usually not far behind—and some of them were killers!

At some point I was required to clean up a scene of Mickey playing the trombone in the show's opening titles. I don't know who had animated it, but they had done it very, very roughly, and it required a lot of clean up. Back then, the animation standard we used was about thirty drawings a day, but I sat down at my desk and turned out about seventy drawings in one day, cleaning this huge scene up, to the amazement of my assistant, Stan Green.

Stan had arrived in our unit some time after the departure of John Freeman, who had taught me so much. I had long since been bumped up to official assistant status, which entitled me to have an assistant of my own, and Stan Green's arrival enlivened things considerably. He seemed to know everybody on the planet. In conversation he would casually drop names and references from the world of films and sports, and refer to them all as friends of his. Right at the point where you would think this was just so much fertilizer (particularly given Stan's penchant for kissing up to his superiors), and that an assistant animator could not possibly be a personal friend to the likes of Gregory Peck or David Janssen or the baseball great Don Drysdale, he would prove that he was! Stan's father, John Green, was an orchestra conductor who had appeared on the Bell Telephone Hour on radio, and this was the source of many of his acquaintances (though he was not the much more famous Hollywood arranger and conductor Johnny Green). Stan's sister, who had worked some as a theater actress, ended up marrying a writer named Ed Adamson, who worked closely with Dick Powell for Powell's television production company Four Star. Among the shows Ed toiled on was a western called *Wanted: Dead or Alive*, starring a very young Steve McQueen. It was a prophetic title, since the series was nearly dead when Powell asked Ed to step in, and he made it alive again and turned it into a show the network wanted.

Sometimes Stan's friends would come and see him at the studio. One time a racecar driver named Johnny Parsons, who had just won the Indianapolis

500, showed up, and even Milt Kahl was impressed. But the one most impressed at that meeting was Johnny, who clapped eyes on Milt's car, which was a custom job made by a friend of his who had a shop in Glendale, and immediately wanted to drive it.

Cars had become another of Milt's passions, as it was with several of us. I had gotten a Jaguar XK-120, Marc Davis had a Jaguar sedan, and Oliver Wallace, who was one of the studio's resident composers and songwriters, got this enormous Cadillac that had a huge long hood covering a tremendous engine, which was held in with a leather strap, and which was way too much car for him. Milt started off with a beautiful green MG, the same kind as was featured in the French film *M. Hulot's Holiday*, where it was virtually a character in the movie. While we were showing off our foreign and/or luxury cars, Walt Disney was driving around in an old Plymouth.

But by this time Milt had his custom job, which his car-builder friend wanted to create as a prototype of something to put into production. It had a fiberglass body, like the Corvette, and while it was being built Milt and I used to drive over to Glendale, which is not far from the Disney Studio in Burbank, to check on the progress. Once I arrived in time to see the workmen set the trunk lid down onto the body and then their thumbs along the edge of the lid until they felt something, pick the whole lid back up and take some sandpaper and shave it down, just a little. It was really a hand-made vehicle. The end result was painted bright red, and Milt was quite proud of it. When Johnny Parsons asked Milt if he could drive it, Milt was thrilled! They went on a joy ride that included drag-racing a motorcyclist.

Other times Stan Green would invite me to a baseball game, and we would sit in the old dugout seats, which were practically below water level. They were not really the best places to see a game, but from that vantage point I could see Stan communicating with the players: he knew them all. Because Stan's wife had received an inheritance from her banker father, they lived in the prestigious Hidden Hills area, where some of the players were their neighbors.

Once the New York Yankees came into town, and it was the season when both Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris were vying for the homerun title. Maris had already broken Babe Ruth's season homerun record, and the competition was on, even though they were teammates. Stan and I grabbed tickets to that game, figuring that no matter what happened, we were guaranteed to see some homeruns, particularly since the Yanks were playing the Angels at the old Wrigley Field (not to be confused with the park in Chicago; this one was in south Los Angeles on Forty-second Place), which for a major ballpark was

really rather small and therefore quite easy to smack one out of. We were destined to be disappointed: Mantle didn't hit anything, but then Maris finally connected.

On top of everything else, Stan Green was a genuine war hero, but he was such a sweet, mild guy that a lot of the others did not believe it. Animation, along with movies in general, had been declared a necessary industry during World War II, and because of that, a lot of the animators and artists avoided combat duty. Even if they did join a branch of the service, they most likely remained stateside so they could create propaganda cartoons and films. Because of this, stories of war heroism within the ranks of Disney's tended to be taken with some salt. Ken O'Brien decided one day to challenge Stan on his history. Ken was a flamboyant, macho sort of guy, and he started ragging Stan a little bit about his experiences in uniform. But then Ken found out that Stan had been in the second wave of troops landing at Normandy. He had also fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He had actually been captured by the enemy but escaped, later earning a medal for his bravery.

Still unwilling to let it go, Ken commented to Stan that he had seen images of soldiers with bayonets affixed to their rifles, and he asked if soldiers still really used bayonets. "Oh, yes," Stan answered.

"Did you ever use it yourself?"

"Yes," Stan confirmed, adding helpfully: "The trick of using a bayonet is once you push it into the enemy, you have to *twist* it to get it back out of their body again."

I thought Ken O'Brien was going to become sick right then and there.

Not all of Stan's wartime experiences were as dangerous—at least they seemed not to be at the time. After we had become good friends, Stan told me that he had enjoyed a wartime affair with the English actress and ballet dancer Moira Shearer, who became famous almost overnight because of the film *The Red Shoes*. The romance, which took place several years prior to her stardom, ended with the war. After that, Stan came back and eventually married. But for years afterward he was still receiving letters from Moira that were juicy enough to force him to keep them hidden from his wife!

Stan was the principal player in a great gag that involved Marc Davis. The setup to this one involved the fact that Marc had his desk situated so it faced the door of his office, and like most of the guys on D-Wing, he worked with his door wide open. One day Stan came in and asked me if I had any shoes with metal taps on the heels, which were fairly common at the time. They weren't for dancing, they were to prevent your heels from wearing down on one side. I told him I did have taps, and he said, "Wear them in tomorrow."

The next day we were both in our tap shoes. Stan said, "I'll walk in a certain cadence right up to the edge of Marc's door and stop, and then you pick it up right on the other side of the door." The effect was that of an invisible guy wearing taps walking down the hall past Marc's office. We did that once, and then tried it again. The second time, Marc looked up and wondered who's walking up and down the hall. So we did it a third time, with nobody crossing past his doorway, but with the steps continuing, and waited for Marc's reaction, now that we had his attention. The fourth time, he slowly got up and headed toward the door, and Stan and I quickly ducked into other rooms. From our vantage points we could see his head slooowly come out of his doorway, and he carefully looked to one side and carefully to the other side, and shrugged, turned around and went back to work. That was as far as his curiosity went. Marc was always so cool about things, he probably thought, "Ah, well, somebody's pulling a gag," and that was that.

Marc was able to give as good as he got. He was a great raconteur. He told me a story about a prank that took place when Disney's was still at the old Hyperion Street studio in Los Angeles, prior to their move to the Burbank facility. This was years before I arrived at the studio. There was a new inbetweenner who had a habit of going into a market that was near the studio at the beginning of each week and buying a week's worth of canned vegetables or fruit for his lunch. After this had gone on for a while, some of the other fellows went into the store and bought up practically the entire stock of canned goods, took them out, and placed them in a tub of water until the labels soaked off. Then they carefully dried and pressed the labels and repasted them on the cans, but randomly. Taking them back to the store, they somehow talked the manager into putting them back on the shelf for that one day. The inbetweenner came in and bought his supply, and then spent his lunch hours for the rest of the week opening cans labeled beans and finding peaches, or thinking he was going to get fruit cocktail for lunch and finding creamed corn. Marc said it drove the poor guy absolutely nuts.

A fitting tagline is that a grocery store now sits on the site of the original Disney Hyperion studio.

On occasion, Marc's aplomb landed him on camera. There was one time when he and Milt were both asked to participate in some publicity event, which would be a live shoot of them sitting in front of a model and talking back and forth about a particular character that they were trying to create, while using the model as a reference. It was automatically expected that Marc, because of his coolness and sophistication, would handle this task with ease, while Milt, who was the more excitable of the two, would be stumbling

all over the place. Instead, it was the opposite. It was not that Marc came off badly; he was fine in the shoot, but it was Milt who impressed the crew on the set, because he had a good voice and he came up with some interesting character bits, like feigning irritation from some remark that Marc had made. I was standing beside the cameraman who was shooting this and at one point he turned to me and said, "Who is that guy? He's a pro, right?" He thought that Milt was an actor who had been hired to play the part of an animator. But Milt was potentially a good actor. You always hear it being said that animators are actors with pencils, and Milt Kahl had a great sense of showmanship.

Stan Green assembled the four of us into a *kaffeklatsch* at the studio and we would meet every morning. Stan would make the coffee, and Milt, Marc, and I would get together and discuss everything from Picasso to baseball to what had recently happened in "the music room," which was the term for each director's main office. The music room would include layout and background functions. When we started this little gathering, Milt did not care for baseball; he thought it was a bore. But because of the *kaffeklatsch*, he eventually became interested in baseball, especially after the Dodgers moved to Los Angeles. He became a fan of the sportscaster Vin Scully and, in typical Milt fashion, quickly developed into quite an avid fan, to the point where he would keep statistics in his head and rattle them off. He had a similar conversion regarding Picasso, whose work he initially claimed not to understand, but through talking with the rest of us began to appreciate and actively collect.

Around this same time a lot of interesting people made their way into the studio for one project or another. Walt had hired a German scientist and science fiction writer named Willy Ley and an even more famous German scientist named Werner Von Braun, the inventor of the V2 in World War II, who more recently was one of the architects of the NASA program, and put the two of them together to work on a different kind of space program . . . a space *television* program. The two of them got on together pretty well, and they frequently had lunch together. I can remember sitting in the Disney commissary and overhearing their conversations, listening to all the crazy things that they came up with. One would say things like, "But there is that one catch, that you have to activate this, and you have to activate it by pressing the button or moving the lever? How do we do it?" Then the other would respond: "We'll train a monkey and send it up there into outer space!" Here were two of the most brilliant minds of the twentieth century and they're sitting in the cafeteria of a cartoon studio talking about monkeys pressing buttons in rocket ships.

Around the time of production on *Sleeping Beauty* in the late 1950s, my

attention was distracted from animation a little bit too. I had met a young inbetweener named Jane Shadduck, who was from Winnipeg, Canada, and we began seeing each other. It soon became serious, and we talked of getting married. Jane, of course, was not Asian, though if that fact bothered my parents, they did not reveal it. They sort of kept mum about it. As their oldest son, they pretty much let me live my life on my own. I believe their approach was to take a deep breath and say, "We'll cope with it." Jane was such a likable person that she and my parents eventually became good friends. She loved my mother's cooking and she introduced her to a lot of that cuisine. If any one was nervous, it may have been from Jane's parents in Canada; though again, it never developed into a problem. The Shadducks were both terrific people.

For our wedding, Jane's parents came down from Canada, my parents were there, and the rest of the invitees were mostly friends from the studio, including Milt and Marc. After the ceremony was over my father approached me and indicated that my co-workers had really endeared themselves to him. "Oh, your friends," he told me, "they're good drinkers!" My father was no slouch as a drinker, but Milt and Marc could be considered masters of the art. It's not that they were drunkards by any means, but due to their many martini-pitcher parties they were expert at consuming impressive quantities and holding their liquor.

Before long Jane and I would have a son, Michael. It would turn out that he inherited the talent that existed between the two of us and would in time develop into quite an impressive artist in his own right. What he did not seem to inherit, however, was our interest in pursuing it as a vocation.

Regarding *Sleeping Beauty*, which was the first animated fairy tale to be done at the studio since *Cinderella*, one of the key factors that perked Walt's interest in it was that it was going to be filmed in Cinemascope, making it the first animated film intended to be shot in widescreen. Walt initially wanted Eric Larsen to direct the film. He called Eric up and began describing the widescreen image, and how it would encompass wonderful long shots with dense forests, and talking about the expanse that's now possible in the theater and how for the first time in animated films, you would have that type of spatial quality, and so on. He managed to sell Eric on it, and Eric attempted to give Walt exactly what he wanted. He began working on a key sequence involving the Sleeping Beauty, or "Princess Aurora," as she's also known, meeting the Prince, and the time when she was hidden away by the Good Fairies. I was involved with it because I had been asked by Marc Davis to once again handle quality control for the character of Aurora. We practically spent one

entire year on this sequence, and the day came when Eric, who had worked his tail off, had to show it to Walt. Marc was there, too. Walt sat and watched the whole long sequence, and afterward his only comment to Eric and Marc was: "You guys ever hear of a close up?" So much for the vastness and majesty of the widescreen.

Walt was, however, fascinated by the backgrounds done by an artist named Eyvind Earle. Whenever I used to go see Eyvind, he would be sitting there in the middle of an entire pile of sunflower seeds. I felt like I was in a baseball dugout. But what an artist he was! Eyvind Earle had a color sense like a piano tuner has ears. In terms of design, Eyvind wanted to achieve a Gothic feeling, and one of the fundamental things by which you achieve a Gothic feeling is a strong overemphasis on horizontals and verticals. That was consistent with the way that he designed the backgrounds. I was by no means surprised when Eyvind successfully turned to fine art painting some years later, becoming extremely popular in the 1980s.

Character designs were handled by Tom Oreb, who was an incredible designer, especially for that time. His designs employed the straight-against-curve motif that was consistent with Eyvind's backgrounds. I had a wonderful time working with Tom and also with another young artist who was assisting me named Burnett "Burny" Mattinson. Burny had a great deal of facility as far as drawing was concerned and was very meticulous about everything, in and out of the studio. One time he decided that he was going to put together a bar in his home in the San Fernando Valley. It was not so much a physical bar as it was a wonderful collection of whiskies and various assorted liquors. There was another fellow at the studio named Tom (not Tom Oreb, but an Irishman from Boston whose last name has unfortunately ended up on the cutting room floor of my memory), and occasionally we would go out together in the evening, after work. If we got a little bored from driving around, Tom would suddenly say, "Hey, let's go put a dent in Burny's liquor cabinet." Often this would occur at two in the morning or so, and we would be forced to wake him up to get served.

Sleep deprivation aside, I think I almost killed Burny off on *Sleeping Beauty* because it was such a laborious job to do that breakdown and inbetweening, because the drawings were so refined. This film was being made during that period that Frank Thomas has spoken of so eloquently, cautioning that we were trying too hard to top ourselves as a craft to the point where we begin to lose sight of the fact that this is a piece of entertainment. Burny survived, however, and remained with Disney long after I had left, going on to co-direct the 1986 feature *The Great Mouse Detective*.

Times were rapidly changing by the time we had finished *Sleeping Beauty*, both within Disney's and for the animation industry as a whole. Not only was new technology beginning to encroach upon traditional techniques, such as Xerography—the process of electronically copying animation drawings directly onto cels, eliminating the need for an inker (*101 Dalmatians* was the first film to use this process exclusively, which is why the very look of the animation is different)—but the business in general was starting to wind down. Walt had virtually closed down the short subject department some years before, and other studios were following suit. MGM had shuttered its cartoon division, cutting loose the two men who were then in charge of it, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera. For the first time there was a degree of underlying nervousness among the Disney animators. Once in a while you would hear one of them say things like, “I’m not sure if I’m going to renew my contract or not.” Even Milt made such rumblings. It was very difficult for a lot of them, particularly those who had been with Disney's for decades, to adjust to the idea that Walt would ignore them or was not taking good care of them. Some of them were trying to develop new ideas for features and not getting very far. Marc Davis and Ken Anderson worked up a film proposal for the book *Chanticleer*, but Walt was more interested in *101 Dalmatians*. As always, Walt had ideas of his own.

The fact that the release of *Sleeping Beauty* in 1959 had not resulted in the major financial hit that Walt had been hoping for, had meant that a lot of Disney animators had been pink-slipped. Fortunately, there was a place for many of them to go: the recently formed Hanna-Barbera studio, which was just then making headway into television cartooning. For Hanna and Barbera, it could not have been a better situation: they needed animators, and here were all these Disney-trained, highly experienced ones out on streets waiting for an offer! Bill Hanna had gotten the idea that all he had to do to staff the studio was pick up the phone, and for the most part, he was right.

I was experiencing uncertainty in my personal life as well. After only a few years, the marriage was not going particularly well. Jane decided that she wanted to go back home to Canada for a while, so she took Michael and off they went. I would not see them again for nearly two years.

On the personal front there was not a lot I could do about the situation. Professionally, though, I decided to take matters into my own hands. I knew that many of the ex-Disney people were extremely taken with Hanna-Barbera, because suddenly they were making more money than Walt was offering and they were being given so much freedom, both creative and personal. Disney's may have been more artistic, but it was also more rigid, with time clocks that



Iwao Takamoto, 1925–2007.
Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



The building depicted at the left was the Takamoto family barracks at Manzanar. In the center is the communal washroom for the block. Painting by F. M. Kumano, 1944. Courtesy of National Park Service, Manzanar Historical Site.

Beginning with "Atom Ant" in the mid-1960s, Iwao became the key studio designer for Hanna-Barbera.™ & © Hanna-Barbera. "Atom Ant" used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



Dick Dastardly and the vacuum cleaner-shaped Muttley, designed by Iwao, would spin off into their own series, *Dastardly and Muttley in Their Flying Machines*.™ & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved.



The wild, wild cast, with vehicles, of *The Wacky Races*.™ & © Hanna-Barbera. “The Wacky Races” used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



Iwao's design of “Astro,” the Jetsons’ family dog, would be a portent of canines to come.™ & © Hanna-Barbera. “The Jetsons” used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

“Zoinks!”™ & © Hanna-Barbera.
 “Scooby-Doo” used courtesy of
 Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros.
 Entertainment Inc.



This watercolor presentation board created by Iwao was used to help sell the series *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* in 1969.™ & © Hanna-Barbera. “Scooby-Doo” used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



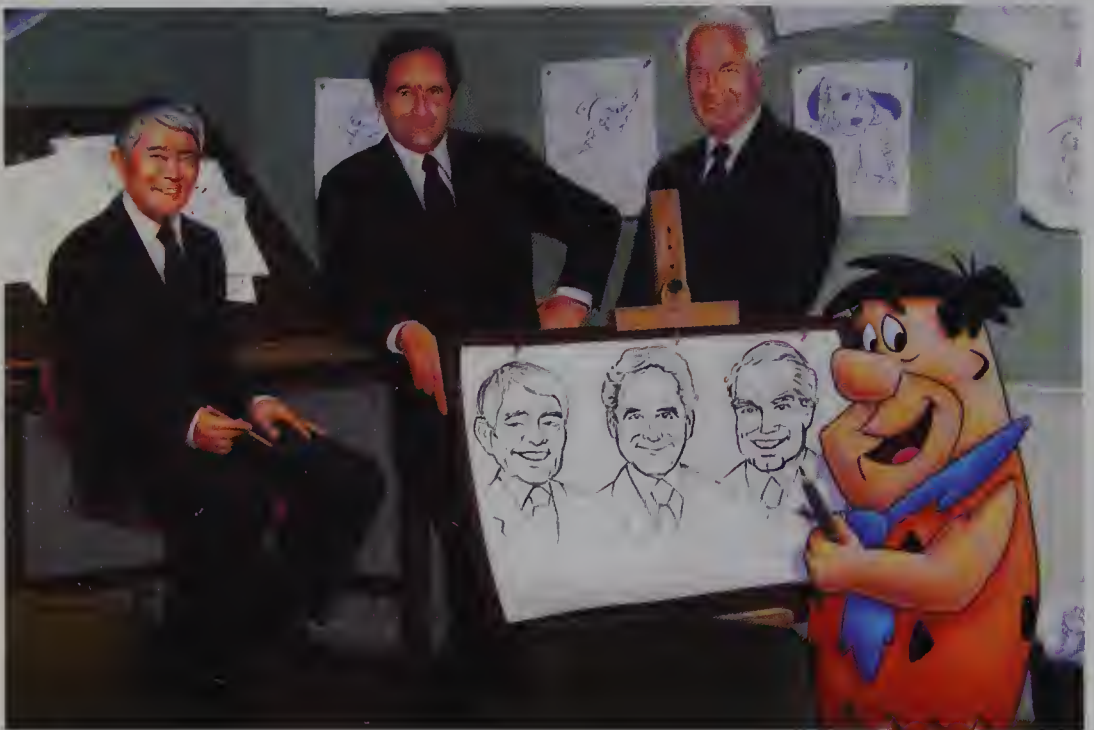
Shaggy and Scooby surrounded by character models, which show the animators how to draw the characters. ™ & © Hanna-Barbera. "Scooby-Doo" used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



"King Pin," an action-filled Iwao Takamoto limited-edition art design featuring Fred Flintstone. ™ & © Hanna-Barbera. "The Flintstones" used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



One of Iwao's earliest designs for Hanna-Barbera was "The Great Gazoo" from *The Flintstones*.[™] & © Hanna-Barbera. "The Flintstones" used courtesy of Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.



Hanna-Barbera Studio icons Iwao Takamoto, Joe Barbera, and Bill Hanna are "sketched" by Fred Flintstone in an elaborate tribute mural that hung in the Warner Bros. Animation building in Burbank, California.[™] & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved.



"Bony Pony Ranch" and "Slink and Slither" were two cartoon projects being developed independently of the studio. Neither was sold. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.





A study of a samurai in pen-and-ink with color. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



A study of football players created with Magic Markers. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

had to be punched every day. At Hanna-Barbera, animators were having a good time.

I felt it was only going to be a matter of time before I received my pink slip from Disney's, and since people were already starting to encourage me to move over to Hanna-Barbera, I walked very brightly into the studio one morning, went to Andy Engman's office, and said, "I want to notify you that I'm giving two weeks' notice." There was some irony involved because I had tried to keep away from people like Andy the whole of my tenure at Disney's. It was not that I didn't like him—despite his stolid personality, he was a well-meaning and nice guy—but I always carried around with me the fear that the next time I saw him, he would fire me. I actually got a bit paranoid about it. I think the reason was because of the snap-decision way they had hired me; I carried around the suspicion that they would fire me in the same impetuous manner. So if nothing else, my resignation would not give him that chance, and I went in half expecting him to say, "Oh, thank God, now we don't have to fire you!"

Instead, I got a very stiff response, even for Andy.

"If you want to leave the major leagues and go back to the minor leagues, that is your business and I won't stop you," he said, in puppet-like fashion, "but I will need a formal letter of resignation."

I was aghast. Just after they had laid off hundreds of people, now they wanted a formal letter? I finally talked one of the secretaries into editing my letter of resignation, because I had no idea about the proper formalities to use on something like that. She must have done a good job, because it was accepted.

My mentors at Disney's stood by my decision. Milt Kahl told me, "No matter what you decide to do or where you go, you're going to do fine. I know that, so it's all up to you." Marc Davis had always been very kind and encouraging. There were times during our *kaffeklatsches* when he would take me aside and say: "Do you know how much exceptional talent that you have? Have you ever really given anybody a chance to see it?" I guess I didn't, and I hadn't. I had, for the most part, just gone along unquestioningly with whatever I had been given to do and been happy with that, never seeking out anything more.

Shikata ga nai.

Milt and Marc were very much in favor of my decision to move on and wished me the best. The only ironic note came from Eric Larson, who said, "Gee, I'm sorry that you're going to be leaving, because there is an opportunity for picking up sequences on *The Sword in the Stone*, and I'd love to have you help me with the animation on them. I know you well enough to know

that if you've already made a commitment you're going to keep it, regardless of what I say, but I just thought that you should at least know that there was an opportunity for you here also."

Finally, I was being offered a chance to animate on my own, something I could actually point to on a credit roll, but it was a little too late.

I never regretted leaving, since I would later learn from some of my compatriots like Burny Mattinson that as the animation division at Disney's became increasingly reduced and modernized, it also became more political. The well-oiled (in more than one sense of the term) machine of the 1940s and 1950s was increasingly becoming fueled by jealousies, competition, and bad feelings throughout the 1960s and 1970s, particularly between the studio legends and a group of young artists who were rising through the system, a group that included a talented fellow named Don Bluth. While I had no idea at the time that all this was going on, I remain glad that I got out before having to struggle through the era of studio politics. It was, after all, enough of a challenge to launch myself into the entirely new, television-friendly system known as "limited" or planned animation.

BILL AND JOE

It is hard to imagine two more different personalities than those of Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera. I think the word to describe Joe is “cool.” His clothes were cool, and he was very conscious of style and dress. He handled his personnel in the same fashion: he was almost unflappable, and he possessed a quick, disarming wit. There’s a story about an incident between Joe—who in the early days usually directed the recording sessions for the shows—and a voice actor, who shall remain nameless. Apparently during a session, Joe had said or done something to get this guy angry, and the actor succinctly told him to go perform a physical impossibility and then walked out of the studio. That was the last time that actor worked at Hanna-Barbera . . . until some years later when he was called back in. Feeling somewhat embarrassed by the encounter, the actor slunk around the studio hoping that he would be spared a run-in with Joe. He had no such luck: the two came face to face in the hallway. “Gee, Joe,” the actor asked sheepishly, “are you gonna throw me out of here?”

“Why would I do that?” Joe asked.

“Because the last time I saw you, I told you to go fuck yourself.”

Without batting an eye, Joe replied: “Yeah, and you know what? I took your advice.”

That was Joe.

Bill Hanna, however, was a very warm, sentimental guy who wore his emotions right on the tip of his nose. He could be extremely direct, even irascible, and was apt to explode at a moment’s notice. New people on his production staff would be scared to death of him. But people who had worked for him for any length of time began to understand his temperament and let him blow off steam, knowing that once he cooled down, everything would be fine. In the confines of the studio you could frequently hear him hollering at

somebody if something was out of line, and then he'd cool off just as quickly as he'd exploded. About an hour later he would wander into the same person's room with a peace offering of a cup of coffee in his hand and would apologize for yelling at him.

That was Bill.

Joe was a diplomat who could talk and soothe and ease into getting you to do whatever he wanted. Bill could always get you to do what he wanted, too, but his style was different. One time Lew Marshall, who had been an animator with Bill and Joe on many of the later "Tom and Jerrys" at MGM, and who was then at Hanna-Barbera working as a storyboard artist, wanted to relocate from his home office to a place in the studio. Back then a lot of the storyboard men would work from their homes, but Lew decided he wanted more contact with the studio. He asked Bill for a room and was given one that he shared with a handyman. Neither man got in the other's way, so Lew worked comfortably until lunch, at which time the handyman pulled out a loaf of Italian bread and a clove of raw garlic, which he began to eat like an apple. When the smell got to be too much for Lew to bear, he went back to see Bill and asked for another place to work.

"No, you stay there," Bill said. "I'll go talk to him and have him stop eating the garlic."

Lew said, "Wait a minute, I don't want to upset the fellow or hurt his feelings."

Bill, however, was adamant. "I'll take care of it and be very, very diplomatic," he promised.

So Lew went back to the office and a few minutes later Bill walked in. He strode directly up to the handyman, who was still munching on his lunch, and barked: "You've got to knock off eating that fucking garlic!" That was diplomacy, Bill Hanna style.

Joe greatly enjoyed the trappings of show business and his circle of friends included other producers, writers, actors, and businessmen. Both he and Bill had their groups within the studio—Joe's being primarily the writers, storymen, and actors, and Bill's being mostly the animation staff—though when Joe was in charge of sponsoring a luncheon for the staff, whether it be "his guys" or the combined studio staff, it would always take place at the Villa Capri in Hollywood, which was then the favorite hangout of Frank Sinatra (Joe tended to adopt certain restaurants, usually Italian ones).

Bill was not a show-biz type. He was more of an outdoorsman who preferred to go off on his boat when not at the studio. He had a converted fishing boat that could sleep eight or ten people and accommodate fifty or so

for a party, and he loved taking “his guys” on fishing trips down to Baja California or up into the Gulf of Cortez, where the fishing was outstanding. He would load his animators onto the boat and go off on weekends, more often than not preparing lunch for them himself in the galley. On one excursion on which my wife, Barbara, and I were invited (my *second* wife, I should elaborate, but more of that later), he came to her and said, “I’m going to be doing an awful lot of cooking today, so you’re the hostess.” She played hostess for the remainder of the cruise. Food was not all that Bill served on his boat; no animator ever went home thirsty, either. After a day of drinking and cruising around Long Beach Harbor with Bill at the wheel, when it came time to dock, you often kept your fingers crossed.

When Bill took his group out for lunch, it was usually at the Cinegrill at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood. One time he called me in and said, “I’d appreciate it if you’d come along with me,” so I went. At the restaurant we all sat down, but I couldn’t see Bill anywhere. I was wondering where he had disappeared to. Then I spotted him standing behind the buffet line, serving the guys himself as they walked past with their plates. He just loved to do things like that.

Bill and Joe were not best friends in the sense that Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston were lifelong best friends, and they did not socialize outside of work. But they greatly respected each other and each other’s abilities, and their partnership lasted more than sixty years. At the time Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera opened up their television cartoon operation, they had each already been working in the cartoon business for a quarter century, and about twenty of those years together. Out of their generation came such legendary cartoon creators as Tex Avery, Chuck Jones, Friz Freleng, Frank Tashlin, and Bob Clampett, all contemporaries in what has been termed the “Golden Age” of cartoons. But the Golden Age was over, in a sense the victim of its own success.

The likes of Hanna, Barbera, Jones, Freleng, Avery, and others like Bob McKimson and the Disney short cartoons makers, were all incredibly prolific throughout their careers and created an enormous backlog of cartoons over the decades. Eventually the producers and studios came to the realization that, since many of these cartoons were timeless, the audience would receive them just as enthusiastically the second or third time they were shown as they had the first. Therefore they decided that they could draw upon the archives they had already built and re-release the best of the old shorts instead of putting money into the production of new ones. Studios like Warner Bros., whose cartoons tended to have more topical references in them, continued

on for a few more years, but Disney and MGM, whose cartoons relied more on character relationships and universal themes than topical references, were suddenly out of business. There was only one marketplace left for veteran animators: television. If the Golden Age of Cartoons had ended with a whimper, the Television Age of Animation was about to launch with a bang.

Hanna and Barbera did not invent television animation, they just made it work. It was Bill Hanna who was responsible for developing that systematic way of efficiently producing animated films for television despite the time and money restrictions and the huge requirement for output. The TV animation being done today is simply an embellishment on what he developed structurally fifty years ago.

In full animation, the kind I had been doing at Disney's, one drawing is created for every frame of film, and it takes twenty-four such frames to make up a second of running time. In some instances the drawings are held for two frames (this is called animating "on twos"), but even that requires twelve drawings, all passing before one's eyes in a blink. In "limited animation," as it came to be known (though I prefer the term "planned animation," which is not only more accurate but rates a higher level of respect), you draw a pose for the character and then move only that which needs to move—an arm, the head, maybe only the mouth—which are drawn on separate cels. The earliest of the Hanna-Barbera characters, such as "Ruff and Reddy," "Huckleberry Hound," and "Yogi Bear," all tended to wear collars and neckties. This was so the head could be easily separated onto its own cel without a seam line. Similarly, they always had muzzles on their faces that were painted in a different color, so you could separate the mouth from the rest of the face. The style of animation itself had a lot of bearing on how a character was designed.

Another planned aspect of television animation was the color palette. In full animation, each portion of a figure is painted its particular color, on each individual cel. In planned animation, because you are stacking up two, three, four, maybe more layers of cels, each containing a limb or part of the figure that you want to move, you have to compensate for the color because each sheet of acetate reacts to the light and affects the color intensity. So instead of having one color to paint a figure—such as gray for Bugs Bunny or brown for Jerry Mouse—you now had to have three or four different jars of paint in graduating hues just to paint the various parts of the figure, in order to make sure that when photographed, all parts emerged the same shade.

Despite the inherent differences, I found that there were as many similarities between Hanna-Barbera animation and Disney animation as there were dissimilarities. Perhaps most important was the shared attitude that a

character must possess a mind and a heart, regardless of how much or little the body moved. This is the sort of thing that Frank, Ollie, and Milt at Disney's spent so much time and talent perfecting, and in their own way, Bill and Joe had done the same thing at MGM with Tom and Jerry. Much more than simply gag-filled chase cartoons, the Tom and Jerry shorts relied as much on the human emotion and relationship between the characters as they did pratfalls and smacks with a frying pan. Bill and Joe's Tom and Jerry almost never spoke, yet you always knew what they were thinking and feeling. One of the fascinations of what we now call two-dimensional animation—that which is hand drawn instead of created with a computer—is to take what is essentially a flat design representing a character and then, through the combination of voice acting, good timing, and the ability to draw attitudes and expressions, begin to give that character a heart, a mind, and a soul, to the point where the audience will actually believe that the character is a living entity.

Even after they moved into television with limited animation, Bill and Joe's style of storytelling had a Disney-esque quality to it, much more so than the Warner Bros. cartoons of the time, which were more gag and joke oriented and not as warm. While undeniably funny, the Warners style to me was more reminiscent of a stand-up comedian's kind of humor: topical and geared toward the punchline instead of character relationships.

One of the biggest attractions of the H-B style of animation for me was that it was very design-oriented. At Disney's, so much of the process was left in the hands of the animators, who were in essence their own directors. After a while, the Nine Old Men and a handful of others even began to receive the on-screen credit, "Directing Animator." There, layout was just what the term implied and no more: it laid out the positions of the characters in a scene without crossing over into such areas as attitude or emotion. Under Bill and Joe, layout was the principal process in making the cartoon, containing and conveying all of the emotional and acting information that the animators needed to bring the character to life.

I was very comfortable with this style of working, and because I came from Disney, Joe was very comfortable with the work I did. I loved doing key poses on a scene, which was probably my greatest strength in animation. I didn't really have the proper amount of patience for some of the other facets of animating, such as timing or overlapping business, or transposing the action to an exposure sheet, which dictates how many frames to hold a drawing and when to move.

In the early days of Hanna-Barbera, this technique was used in an absolutely clean, pure way. The artwork and animation was also augmented by

voice work provided by a stable of highly developed talent from radio, people like Daws Butler and Don Messick (who between them did nearly all of the earliest Hanna-Barbera characters), Mel Blanc, Jean Van der Pyl, and June Foray. Today there are literally hundreds of actors doing animation voices, but I don't see . . . or hear . . . much evidence of that kind of talent in today's cartoons. Even among all the big-name actors who are being featured in theatrical feature films, truly outstanding voice performances seem to be scarce.

Some people have suggested over the years that one did not have to be as good an artist for this style of animation than the full, elaborate Disney style, but that is not the case. Because many of the drawings had to be held on screen for a long time, as opposed to one-twenty-fourth or one-twelfth of a second, the poses had to be extremely accomplished and funny in and of themselves. That takes a lot of talent, and the Hanna-Barbera studio had it, with Bill and Joe themselves right at the top of the list.

In their Tom and Jerry days, Joe would do the rough layouts himself, indicating the interaction of the characters, their attitudes, and the flow of the action. He had a knack for capturing both attitude and action in a very quick, rough sketch, and so many of Tom's attitudes you could actually see Joe doing.

Joe would then hand the sketches over to layout artists like Harvey Eisenberg and Richard "Bick" Bickenbach, and they would clean up the drawings. Joe was a great believer in practically pose-animating a cartoon right in the layout phase. This way he could also retain control over how the animation looked, since he did not always trust the animators to carry out his vision on their own. Joe would continue to work in this manner as the team moved into television, supervising what is now called the pre-production aspects of animation, such as character creation, design, and layout. He would spend hours and hours going over scripts with the writers and overseeing the entire story process.

Once the storyboards and voice tracks were done, the work was transferred to Bill, who would time it out and supervise the actual animation. Bill loved to work on bar sheets, like a musician, rather than exposure sheets, which listed the number of frames that each image should be photographed—in fact, Bill's creativity often extended to the music for a show. Once a cartoon or an episode was in Bill's hands, I don't think Joe even bothered to look. He had total faith in him, just as Bill had total acceptance of what Joe had done. It was a very positive and efficient relationship between two people who worked together in this fashion of complete confidence and professional

trust. Their ability to work well together was a good thing, since they were practically working in each other's laps when I first joined the studio. They were renting space in a building without windows while they were waiting for their new studio on Cahuenga Boulevard in Hollywood to be completed, and literally sharing an office, where they could pass the work back and forth.

Bill shared more than just an office: he also shared his demands with the entire studio. It was not an intentional act, but while the two were using the same room, Bill had gotten into the habit of raising his voice and hollering out to his secretary, Guyla Avery, whose desk was right outside the office, whenever he wanted something. And when Bill hollered, you could hear him all over the building. Finally they installed an intercom system between he and Guyla, which was all well and good, except that Bill could never get used to it. He would press down the intercom button, which would buzz at Guyla's desk, and then he would shout whatever it was he wanted at the top of his lungs into the intercom. Guyla had a marvelous giggle, and you could likewise hear her all over the studio. Time and time again she attempted to explain that the intercom negated his need to shout out, but it took years for Bill to master the device.

At the time I signed on in 1961, Hanna-Barbera's chief designers were Bick Bickenbach, Gene Hazelton, and the artist who really seemed to set the style for the studio, Ed Benedict. Ed had also come from the MGM short cartoon department, but there he had worked mostly in Tex Avery's unit instead of Bill and Joe's. I did not have much of a chance to know or work directly with Ed, but I learned a lot just from looking at the work that he did, not so much in regard to his character designs, but his backgrounds. I loved his thinking process, and the simplicity in which he got across his ideas in shows like "The Flintstones." Ed's designs made the homes really look like they were dug out of a boulder, with a flat granite slab on top, looking like it had just been lowered down there on the head of a dinosaur. The result was almost cave-like, but at the same time strangely modern; a real primitive but fun environment which set the pattern for visual stylings that are still being used today in animation.

"The Flintstones" was the first time anybody had even attempted a half-hour prime-time animated situation comedy. There are several different versions of how the show came about, but the most common version, and the one I believe to be the correct version, involved Harvey Eisenberg and a fellow named John Mitchell, who acted as the agent for Hanna-Barbera Productions. Mitchell was a nice guy . . . but aggressive! I guess you have to be to be a good agent. He had a very robust, energetic personality, and when he said,

"We do this," everybody, including Bill and Joe, listened. In fact, Joe liked to tell a story about how Bill, momentarily overwhelmed by the enormity of creating a half-hour animated show every week, at one point conceded defeat and threatened to throw in the towel. Joe calmly agreed to go along with the decision, but told Bill to call up Mitchell and tell him personally that they were bailing on "The Flintstones." Bill did, and Joe says that the language he heard coming back over the phone, even from across the room, just about incinerated the office. So when his ears cooled off, Bill went back to work and finished the show.

Mitchell was the catalyst for getting the show on the air, but the idea was born out of a rap session between Bill, Joe, Harvey, and probably a couple other people, all sitting together and kicking around thoughts and ideas. The directive had come down to put a family show on in the nighttime, and Joe was thinking of a format similar to "The Honeymooners," involving two different couples. After tossing it around for a while, it was Harvey who finally arrived at the thought that maybe a stone-age family might work. He made a sketch of a caveman and showed it to Joe, but Joe, according to the story, was lukewarm about the idea. When Mitchell got a quick look at the sketch, though, he said: "This is it! This is what we're going to do!" After that, Joe practically killed himself going around with Mitchell throughout New York, carrying portfolios around with a lot of storyboards, pitching the show all over the place, not only to the networks, but also to a bunch of sponsors, which in those days were vitally important to television production. The show sold, of course, and became a television landmark.

This example of how Joe could adapt himself to an idea and successfully realize it, along with the way in which Bill could figure out how to accomplish a production model that had never been done before, and which some believed could not be done, and pull it off week after week, I believe is a big part of the reason that Hanna-Barbera became the kings of TV animation.

But they had access to an awful lot of talent as well. Among the hugely creative people who were there in the early years was Dan Gordon, who was a designer, an animator, a storyman, an all-around talent. He had been in the business for decades and was a great gag man, but he also suffered from the affliction that affected so many others in the industry: alcoholism. I don't really know why drinking was so prevalent within the business, but I've often wondered if it had carried over into film from the newspaper trade. Quite a few of those who went into animation in the early years were cartoonists out of New York, and newspapermen of that era were known for their thirst. Perhaps they carried their drinking from the periodical end of the business into

the animation end of it. At Disney's, a large percentage of the fellows drank quite a bit because of the pressure that they felt. I might run into a group of them at an establishment called Alphonse's, which was a favorite watering hole, but they would also have open bottles of vodka in their desk drawers in the office.

Back in the 1930s, Dan had been one of the artists who moved with Max Fleischer down to a new studio in Florida to produce the feature film *Gulliver's Travels*. Stan Green, my assistant at Disney's, had also been down there at that time. Stan used to drive Dan to and from the studio, because Dan was usually too inebriated to drive himself. One time, Stan said, Dan had not bothered to close the car door after getting in, and when Stan took a sharp turn, the door flew open, and in a flash there was no more Dan. He had fallen out onto the road. But he was so "protected" by alcohol that he was not even hurt.

At the time I was working with him, Dan used to hang out in the Cinegrill, which was a famous club attached to the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, on Hollywood Boulevard. Sometimes after a late evening at the studio, I would go to the Cinegrill with Harvey Eisenberg's son Jerry, who also worked as a layout artist at the studio, for dinner, and invariably Dan would be there, hanging out. We would go over and buy him a drink—Dan's refreshment of choice was the boilermaker—and on one occasion I remember sitting with him and conducting an impromptu story meeting about how some project we were working on lacked a script. Dan always communicated with little drawings, rather than try to describe what he was thinking, and I remember that his hands were constantly shaking. I wondered, "How the devil is he going to draw anything with his hands shaking like crazy?" But he picked up a pencil, and brought his quivering hand down toward the paper, and as soon as the point of the pencil touched it, everything solidified. His shaking stopped and very quickly a little idea sketch emerged. Despite his drinking, Dan remained full of ideas.

On the animation side of things was another veteran artist named Ken Muse, who had been with Bill and Joe for years in their unit at MGM. Ken was an amazing guy, and one of the best people to have around if you are starting up an animation company and had to pay a lot of attention to budgets and schedules, because he was so incredibly fast. Then and now, time is money, and Ken Muse could accomplish more in less time than just about anyone I ever saw. It was he who set the pace for the type of footage that Bill Hanna wanted. Bill used to work on a bonus system, and he would set a minimum amount of work that he liked to have—a hundred feet a week (animation is

measured by the foot of film, and a hundred feet is a little over a minute). While Bill didn't insist upon it, it was something that people would be working for. For most animators a hundred feet a week was a challenging workload, but Ken used to surpass that by two-or-three-fold. He was reputed to once have turned in four hundred feet in the course of one week.

Ken kept getting more and more clever and better about all the tricks that you could use within that early planned animation technique. His speed was not simply the result of how fast he could draw, but also how brilliantly he planned out his animation for a scene. His drawing did not have the refinement of, say, Irv Spence, who was another of Bill and Joe's "Tom and Jerry" animators, and probably the most refined draftsman that they had. But Ken was a record setter; he was like the Stan Musial or Babe Ruth of animation.

Bick Bickenbach was just as fast in the layout area, a tremendously prolific artist, and like every good draftsman I've ever known, he made everything he did look easy. It was Bick who would take a lot of Ed Benedict's designs and modify them for the animators so that they were easier to move around.

For a half-hour show like "The Flintstones," you generally had four weeks in which to lay it out. Bick could finish a show in two to two and a half weeks, and at the same time he'd be helping other artists design all of the episodic models. And his work was probably superior to most of the people there. Lew Marshall was also there from the earliest days of Hanna-Barbera in television. Lew served as an associate producer and a story editor, someone who would take the rough story work and edit it all into workable storyboards for production. Probably the fastest of the lot, though, was Alex Lovy. Anytime they got into a jam, and needed something done almost impossibly quickly, they would give it to Alex to do. He would take it home over the weekend and bring it in on Monday, a finished ten-minute episode. People like Alex were a great asset to the studio, but the downside was that Bill, who was perpetually under pressure to get all the production work done, began to take their speed and facility for granted.

Warren Foster was technically considered a writer, but like all cartoon writers from the old days, he drew his scripts. Warren had been on the staff of the Warner Bros. cartoon studio for decades, but once he moved over to Hanna-Barbera, he all but took over "The Flintstones" for its first season, and I believe his influence was one of the key factors for its success. I say this because one time Bill Hanna told me: "Joe and I wrote the first episode and Warren wrote all the rest of them." He put it as simply as that. I remember Joe describing Warren sitting at his desk, working like crazy, drawing and writing a sequence down, and periodically breaking out in laughter. Warren

just couldn't contain himself, he was having such a good time, and Joe used to love to stand around outside his door and just watch him.

By the second or third season of "The Flintstones," another writing team, Ray Allen and Harvey Bullock came in. They were both from live-action television and were not traditional animation writers, which meant they typed their jokes instead of drawing them, but they were terrific to work with. In fact, Ray at one point asked me to work with him on a screenplay in which he was very interested in writing about the internment experience at Manzanar. Unfortunately, it never came to pass.

Harvey was a very handy guy and his homes always reflected his personality because he had installed so much of the gadgetry to be found in them himself. His last house was a beautiful place located in Laguna Niguel, with a marvelous view of the ocean and good views of the St. Regis Hotel on one side and the Ritz Carlton on the other. It had a veranda that practically encircled the entire house. After Harvey died, his daughter put together a memorial service at this house, and one of the things we learned about Harvey was that he had once served as the drum major for the Duke University marching band. After lunch, all of us attending were asked to go out onto the veranda, where very shortly we heard the sound of a band. Looking down onto the street below, we saw the Duke marching band come by, serenading Harvey's memory, with the current drum major dressed in the same uniform that Harvey had worn so many years before. I consider the time I spent with Ray and Harvey and the work we accomplished together as highlights of my time at Hanna-Barbera.

I cannot lay claim to having designed much on "The Flintstones," except for "The Great Gazoo," a small, green alien character who was added in later seasons to act as a foil for Fred and Barney. By the time I got there, it was a well-oiled machine. The same goes for "Top Cat," which was also in production then. If "The Honeymooners" provided inspiration for "The Flintstones," "Top Cat" took its lead from the old "Sgt. Bilko" show about a con man in the military who surrounded himself with a platoon of wacky co-conspirators, all of whom were dedicated to getting the better of the army brass. Take it out of the military, give the characters whiskers, and you've got "Top Cat."

The projects I began on at Hanna-Barbera were the more short cartoon-oriented ones, as opposed to episodic series. I worked on some "Quick Draw McGraw" shorts and also on "Loopy de Loop," which was a series of theatrical shorts featuring a French wolf, that were being released by Columbia. Exactly why Hanna-Barbera launched into theatrical cartoons when everybody else in town had either gotten out of them or were in the process of doing so

is something I've never known, but the shorts were produced for several more years.

One day Joe called a group of us in and said, "There's going to be a new series about a family in the future," and that was the beginnings of "The Jetsons." It was to be similar to "The Flintstones" in the respect that the episodes were built around gimmickry and gags, only this time the gags were all futuristic spoofs on everyday life instead of stone-age ones. The inspiration for this show was the old "Blondie" B-movie series, which also had a harried husband dealing with both his family at home and a demanding boss at work. Whereas the stories in "The Flintstones" were often driven by Fred's bombastic over-enthusiasm about one thing or another, "The Jetsons" was structured in a more farcical way, with misunderstandings between the characters often driving the plots.

I was able to contribute a lot more in the way of design and styling on that show, and one of my contributions was the design of "Astro," the family dog. While I did not know it at the time, the ability to craft a dog character with a tendency to act at times semi-human would weigh heavily in my career at the studio.

In addition to Jerry Eisenberg, we now had Willie Ito working at the studio in a layout and design capacity. Willie and I had worked together at Disney's some years before; in fact, I was the one who had interviewed him when he applied for a job there. As the 1960s progressed, most of the characters and shows to come out of Hanna-Barbera were designed by one or other of the three of us.

Jerry Eisenberg became one of my best friends. He's a big, hearty guy and great fun to be around, and one of those artists who is very imaginative and who can turn out an incredible amount of work . . . and along with it, an incredible amount of words. During working hours, Jerry rarely, if ever, stopped talking. We all sat in cubicles, where the walls only went so high, so there were no sound barriers, and Jerry could be heard everywhere. He would blather on, sometimes joined by Willie, and the two of them together would raise hell in the layout department. Those of us who knew Jerry well just let it go, but it used to drive some of the older guys crazy. Meanwhile, the animators, who were sitting on the other side of the building, but still within listening range, would come over and ask, "Isn't there any way of shutting him up?" But while Jerry was rambling on and on, he was also turning out an unbelievable amount of good work: for him, talk was like exhaust—the by-product of propulsion. Even so, the point would come where his voice just started to break through the walls, and I would stand up and yell out, "Just

shut up, Jerry!" The whole department would rise and give me a standing ovation.

Jerry designed a sequence for "The Jetsons" that has become a classic: the song "Eep Opp Ork Ah-Ah," which in the show was sung by actors George O'Hanlon and Janet Waldo, who voiced George and Judy Jetson. In the same way that Joe Barbera possessed the ability to cast the right voice for a character, Bill Hanna always had a knack for casting the right artist for a particular project. For this one he hired an animator and director who was, and still is, legendary within the industry, but who is not that well known to the general public: Bobe Cannon. Bobe (whose real first name was Robert, but everybody knew him as "Bobe") had come through the Warner Bros. cartoon studio as an animator and then went on to become one of the driving forces at UPA. His emphasis lay in the nuances of movement, and he was completely fascinated with movement for its own sake, a fascination that spread into an abstract type of movement, rather than anything that leaned toward the realistic, which was the exact opposite of the way that Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston at Disney's viewed their work. Bobe used to say that if he saw one more animated character drop his shoulder and lead with his elbow in anticipation of a turn, he was going to scream. "Eep Opp Ork Ah-Ah" had that kind of stylized, almost abstract, design and movement that Bobe loved, which was a bit revolutionary for television animation of the time. It could even be regarded as the world's first music video.

Outside the studio, Bobe shared my passion for music. The two of us used to go out to clubs and the like occasionally, and one time we decided to see Joan Baez at the Hollywood Bowl, along with Bobe's four kids and their friends. At that time I was on kind of a country-western and folk music kick. I had seen Joan Baez perform a couple of times, and I loved her marvelous, bird-like voice. So that night at the Bowl was the performance at which she introduced her protégé, some kid named Bob Dylan. Despite my attraction to the folk style of music, the kind popularized by Pete Seeger, and despite Bobe's forward-leaning tendencies, neither one of us reacted very positively to Dylan, whose unusual voice and style of singing have since become accepted, even beloved, but way back then were simply . . . unusual. However, Bobe's kids and their friends, who sat above us in the Bowl, were totally taken by Dylan, and went on and on and on about him. All Bobe and I could do was look at each other and think, "We are old, aren't we?"

Bobe and I worked on another project outside Hanna-Barbera. We had been brought in by an independent producer named Fred Calvert to animate the main title credits for "The Alvin Show." For Bobe, it was another freelance

assignment. At Disney's I had gained a reputation as a fast worker who did not compromise quality for speed, and as it happened, Fred's wife, Kimi, had worked for me there on *Sleeping Beauty*, so I was already friendly with Fred. I got a call from him explaining that he was in desperate shape: he had to deliver this sequence in a big hurry, and did not know anybody other than me who could accomplish the follow-up animation to his satisfaction in the requisite time. So I was talked into moonlighting for Fred and serving as assistant animator to Bobe for a few days.

As I said, Jerry Eisenberg tended to be the life of the party, and one of his more outrageous practices was pretending that he was gay. I've never been exactly sure why (outside of the fact that it is quite funny coming from a guy as big as Jerry), but he has long delighted in treating everybody to this routine. Those who know him know it's a gag and usually play along. For instance, he used to get on the elevator at the studio, and it might stop at a floor and a group of women would get on. Jerry would go, "Oh, god, *women* . . . all of you stand over on one side!" Some of the women would respond by looking at him and saying things like, "Let's jump his bones!" I'm pretty sure that was the rationale for the act!

People who did not know Jerry (and this was still in the early days of the studio, before some people really had the chance to know one another well) were a bit uncertain as to how to take his gay affectation. I eventually contributed something to this ongoing routine. I remembered a comic strip called "Tillie the Toiler," which would frequently include a panel featuring a drawing of Tilly (who was quite realistically rendered) in her skivvies, along with cutout clothing that girls could hang over the drawing, like a paper doll. So I whipped up a really broad caricature of Jerry, ample stomach and all, and asked an assistant to paste it onto cardboard and cut it out. Then I put the drawing up with a sign informing everybody that costumes for Jerry would be welcome. All of the girls who worked there (some of whom had probably grown up with Tillie the Toiler) began coming up with these dress designs and insane costumes to put on the Jerry figure. Jerry thought this was hilarious. In fact, only recently he expressed annoyance that he no longer knew where this paper doll was. He wanted to put it back up!

Jerry's routine came to a head during the various tour groups that the studio allowed in for public relations purposes. In its early days, Hanna-Barbera was associated with Screen Gems, the TV division of Columbia Studios. The man who handled publicity for H-B through Screen Gems was named Arnie Carr, and when Bill and Joe's new building was opened on Cahuenga Boule-

vard in 1963, Arnie's assistant, a young woman named Barbara Farber, would lead groups of people through. They would stop at the group of offices where Jerry Eisenberg, Willie Ito, and I had our cubicles. We must have been a bit looser and more entertaining for the tours than some of the others at the studio, who were intent on continuing work more than anything else, and that's why we became a regular stop.

On more than one occasion Barbara came around with a group of Cub Scouts and their mothers, giving them a tour of the studio. When she came down to our department, she would usher all the Scouts and their moms into Jerry's cubicle—where he'd be busy working away—and say, "This is Jerry Eisenberg." Jerry would suddenly turn around, survey the crowd of Cub Scouts standing around him, and go, "Oooohhhh, *little boys!*" Their mothers, who were standing behind these kids, would suddenly clutch them and protect them as though facing a charging lion!

Fortunately for all of us—but particularly for me—Barbara Farber was not scared off by our antics. On the contrary, we all got along extremely well and she started to go out with a group of us from the studio for lunch. We would regularly go to a nearby Mexican restaurant and have a margarita and just talk. As time went on, it seemed like Barbara and I began to spend more time talking to each other at these lunches than the others. This led to our going out together in the evenings, and it just evolved into a relationship.

Since we had met at the studio, our whole relationship revolved around working at Hanna-Barbera, but Barbara had an extensive professional background elsewhere in the entertainment industry. As a teenager, she had worked for a man named Charlie Simonelli in Universal Picture's publicity office in New York. That was when Universal had that whole tremendous stable of young actors, equal to the MGM stable from a decade or so before that. Upon relocating to Los Angeles, she worked for an entertainment trade paper.

Among the things we had in common were previous unsuccessful marriages. My marriage to Jane had officially ended when, after living apart for nearly two years, I informed her that I wanted a divorce, which I received. Like me, Barbara had been married once already and she had a child, a daughter named Leslie, who was about a year older than my son Michael.

Barbara and I were married in 1964. When they were young we used to take Michael and Leslie around together, and despite their ethnic differences, people accepted them as brother and sister without batting an eyelash. Our kids did not see a lot of each other growing up—Michael was still living with

Jane at that point—but they liked each other and still do. There was never a problem between them.

As for Barbara and I, we are still happily married after more than forty years. The second time's the charm, I guess.

HARDWORKING ARTISTS AND “LAZY LUCY”

In the early 1960s, just as our television output was really heating up and the studio was busier than ever, Bill and Joe decided to take the plunge into an area in which they had virtually no experience, but I did: features. The first was a full-length film called *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear*. That film established a method of working between Joe and I that would increasingly be repeated over the years. He appeared in my office one day and announced that he was not satisfied with the way “Cindy Bear,” Yogi’s love interest, had been drawn in the television shorts in which she had appeared. She was not cute enough for his tastes. Joe felt that the feature needed a much more appealing leading lady, even if the leading lady was a female bear. Yogi, after all, had to become smitten. So, harkening back to the time I redesigned Disney’s “Lady” to make her more feminine, I took a pass on Cindy, instilling in her all the ursine sex appeal I could. Joe was happy with my design, and the process of my becoming involved in projects that I had not started by way of Joe’s dropping by and casually saying, “Hey, take a look at this, would you?” was set.

The storyline of *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear*, which was written by Bill, Joe, and Warren Foster, was set partially in a circus. In addition to Cindy, I also designed the dastardly circus owners and sinister dog, “Mugger.” We tended to do a lot of dog characters at the studio so I was searching for a way of doing an entirely different approach to the design of this character. I happened to mention that to a layout man named Victor Haboush, whom we had brought in from Disney’s for the film, and just off the top of his head, Vic said: “How about if he’s shaped like a vacuum cleaner?” The first thing that came to me was a canister-style vacuum cleaner, so I started off with that shape, added a head on the end of it, stuck legs on it and added hair. That was the birth of Mugger.

Then in the recording booth, Joe and Don Messick somehow arrived at

giving him a wheezy snicker, which worked perfectly for some of the gags I put into the storyboard. In one, I had Mugger, the circus owner, and his lackey sitting in the cab of a truck, with the owner driving and Mugger in the middle. They're all driving around looking for something, and suddenly the lackey in the passenger's seat spots it and points, extending his arm across Mugger. No sooner has he cried: "Look, there it is!" than Mugger chomps down on his arm, then snickers to himself.

If the description of Mugger sounds familiar, it's because the basic character had life beyond *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear*. With not much design change except for the color (he started a bluish hue and eventually became a dusty brown) he transformed into "Muttley," the much-beloved sidekick of "Dick Dastardly," the villain of "The Wacky Races."

There was another scene in the film that points up Joe's incredible facility for creating scenes and characters off the cuff. He called Jerry Eisenberg and me to his office one day and told us about a sequence in the picture that involved Cindy Bear on a train, along with four other bears who launch into a song. While we sat there, Joe worked out the entire routine of the song, talking while making these little thumbnail sketches on a small yellow pad, which is how he usually worked. In no time at all, he had dictated the entire sequence, which involved some fancy choreography and visual gags with suitcases. Jerry and I took back his thumbnails, designed the characters, and laid out the song. This is apparently how he used to work in his and Bill's "Tom and Jerry" days as well, the stories and gags just tumbling out of him.

The production of that film required a ramping-up of the staff. In addition to Victor Haboush, we also imported layout men Ernie Nordli and Bruce Bushman from Disney's and to animate we brought in Fred Wolf—who was an Oscar winner for Best Animated Short Subject and who has since started his own studio and scored with a property called "Teenaged Mutant Ninja Turtles"—and Ken Harris, Chuck Jones's lead animator from Warners. Bruce Bushman and Fred Wolf stayed with Hanna-Barbera for quite a while after the film.

I had storyboarded certain segments of *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear*. In those days we had an apparatus called a "Lazy Lucy." That's not its technical name, of course, but that was what we called it. Its purpose was to either enlarge or reduce the size of drawings. It had a lens of some sort and a glass platen on which you would see the image in whatever size you wanted. It also had a hood and curtain around it to block out enough of the light to see the projected image.

The Lucy was located on the side of a hallway in a small alcove, right in

between my office at the time and the men's room. On my way to the men's room one day I passed the Lucy and noticed two sets of feet under the hood. I went about my business and returned to my office. A couple hours later, I once again ventured down the hallway, and saw the same four feet still there. The third time I saw the feet, I finally stopped and flipped open the curtain. There were Ken and Fred, hunched over the glass platen, busily tracing something. "What the devil are you guys doing?" I asked.

"What the hell do you think we're doing?" one of them replied. "We've got the layouts that were taken off of your storyboards, and the layouts were crummy compared to your stuff, so we're blowing up your storyboards and using that for layout!" The two of them spent hours in there, tracing those drawings.

Fred Wolf, incidentally, used to chew me out periodically about my career path. He had seen some of my animation posing, and he would say: "I don't know why you let them talk you into just working in design! The industry lost one of its potentially great animators."

I was happy he felt that way, but I would still counter: "I don't like the mechanics of it." A lot of animation is figuring out frame exposures and other very technical things.

"Oh, hell," Fred would snort, "that's the easy part."

"Not to me," I'd remind him. The truth was, I had a hard time focusing on animation because of the boredom factor. I liked moving forward, which the design end of things offered me.

Hey There, It's Yogi Bear came out in 1964, and was enough of a hit to warrant another feature, *The Man Called Flintstone*, which was released two years later. On television, "The Flintstones" had tended to reflect entertainment trends (it was the first animated show to feature celebrity guest stars like Ann-Margret, Tony Curtis, and singer James Darren, who in the world of Bedrock were Ann-Margrock, Stoney Curtis, and James Darrock) and the feature carried on that trend by using the Flintstones to capitalize on the spy craze of the mid-1960s.

One of the key players at the studio both on television and in these two features was Nick Nichols, who had also come from Disney's, and whom I had gotten to know extremely well. I think Nick is something of an unsung legend in the animation business. He did so much but he never got a lot of attention. It was Nick—who was usually credited under his full name, Charles A. Nichols—who had co-directed *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom* with Ward Kimball at Disney's and walked away with an Oscar for it. Walt regarded him as a jack of all trades and a troubleshooter; if he had something that was out of

the ordinary that needed to be done, he'd just call Nick in. Nick's unit worked on many of the television commercials produced by Disney, and since he had a live-action Director's Guild card, he also shot some of Walt's introductions to his Sunday evening television show.

Once Nick moved to Hanna-Barbera, his job duties were not so far ranging, but he quickly became a key cog in the machine. Nick's title was "animation director," which is a little different than being the show director, who also deals with the pre- and post-production aspects. Nick would do the broad stroke timing of the shows to bring them into a reasonable length, and then he would write the exposure sheets on them, hand out the work, and supervise the animators. In short, he saw to it that everything in the animation department was working. It was exactly what Bill Hanna had traditionally done, and was still doing, though as time went on and the studio became busier and busier, he split his duties with Nick.

In fact, to the people who worked under Nick, he was "the Chief" just as much as Bill was. Directors who followed him at the studio, such as Ray Patterson, who had been an animator in the MGM "Tom and Jerry" unit, and Carl Urbano, learned from him how to pump out a huge amount of footage and have the shows turn out as good as they were. Frequently you would walk through the studio in those days and hear someone say suddenly, "This is the way Nick would have done it." He had a strong influence on what made the Hanna-Barbera Saturday-morning-type shows the way they were from a production standpoint, probably as much influence as anybody.

Among Nick's responsibilities was cutting a show down to proper air length if it ran too long. He used to kid me all the time about the running length represented in my layouts. I would see him at the coffee machine and he'd say, "Boy, were you off! You were twenty-five feet over!" The joke there is that twenty-five feet is just about the perfect overage for being able to trim out some of the chaff that may still be in a show and get it down to a real workable length. Every time I'd see him, he'd say the same thing: twenty-five feet, thirty feet, and always tease me about it. It happened so often that I began to realize that I had some kind of inner timing mechanism that allowed me to turn out every episode exactly the same length.

There were some others in the studio who did not seem to have that same sense of timing, particularly when it came to timing out a written script prior to laying it out. We would literally take a stopwatch and read the script, timing it, and find out whether we had to cut anything, or even add a few things here and there. One time Lew Marshall came running in nearly hysterical,

clutching a script for an hour-long special. "This is four-hundred feet over!" he cried. I had already read it and timed it and knew that couldn't possibly be right. To me it was a richly written show and just about right in terms of timing. But Lew was adamant. "I'll prove it to you!" he said. He took the first page and put a stopwatch on it, and it took no time for me to figure out what the problem was: he was reading not only the dialogue and the action off the page, but also all of the writer's descriptions of things that would in no way end up on the screen! No wonder it was coming out so long. It struck me funny that a guy with as much experience as Lew would forget to stop the watch while reading those parts of the script.

For all of Nick Nichols's enormous contribution to Hanna-Barbera, there was definitely a time when Nick felt that his contributions were being taken for granted. In 1972, he and I had made a television special titled "The Last of the Curlews," which was one of those "After School Specials" they were doing at the time. It ended up being nominated for an Emmy Award as Outstanding Children's Program. The awards in those days were given out at the Shubert Theatre in Century City, on the west side of Los Angeles. We must have had a pretty good idea that we might win, because not only was Joe Barbera there, but so were Nick and I.

When the category came up, "Curlews" was indeed announced as the winner, and Joe bounded up on stage to accept the Emmy. He thanked the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, of course, and continued on in his thank-yous until he got to Nick and me, and then he said something that floored both of us, but for very different reasons. As for me, I was stunned when I heard Joe say: "I also want to thank the genius of the studio, Iwao Takamoto," because, like Walt Disney, Joe was not a man given to idle compliments or even active ones. Those who knew Joe well were equally stunned. And apparently he stunned himself hearing the words bounce back because he went on to add: "and his co-director Nick *Nicholas*," getting Nick's name wrong in front of a packed crowd and on live television. The Shubert Theatre is pretty big, but even so, I swore Nick was going to hit the ceiling.

The Emmys were on a Sunday night. Monday, I walked into Nick's office at the studio and he's still steaming. I just sat there and listened to him vent, and when somebody listens to you like that, it allows you to build momentum. I guess I served that purpose for Nick—just like I occasionally did for Milt Kahl back at Disney's. Soon Nick was really wound up. "I've worked with him long enough for him to remember my name!" he said. "I've got to go up there and let him know what my feelings are!" He went charging out of the

office and stormed up to Joe's, and came wandering back in about ten minutes later, looking an awful lot like Milt after his confrontation with Walt that one time.

"What happened?" I asked. "Did you see him?"

Nick said, "Well, I looked for him and caught him coming down the stairs. Before I could say anything he stopped me and said, 'Nick, get ready to go to court, because we're going to change your name.'"

Joe, however, did not emerge from that evening unscathed. After the ceremony and our win, several of us went to a post-Emmy party, where Joe had taken two tables. Among the group was Harvey Bullock and my wife, Barbara. While Joe was ordering up champagne to celebrate our Emmy, Harvey turned to Barbara and asked her to dance.

While the two of them were tripping the light fantastic, Joe's champagne arrives, but he decides to wait until the music stops and everybody is back before uncorking it, so he can give a toast. Eventually the music stops and the dancers start to leave the floor, but Harvey, who was known to be hard of hearing, spotted the champagne being delivered and told Barbara to keep dancing. There is no music, but the two keep spinning around the floor. Hard of hearing or not, Harvey knew damn well that the music had stopped, but he wanted Joe to sit there and cool his heels for as long as possible. He told Barbara: "The worst thing that can happen is they'll all be standing around going, 'Oh, look at poor deaf Harvey, he doesn't even know the music has stopped!'" Finally they stop dancing and approach the table, where it was now a contest to see which cork was going to blow first: Joe's or the champagne bottle's.

If Bill was starting to turn over some of his workload to Nick Nichols, Joe was starting to give me more and more responsibilities for designing things. The first character designs with which I was wholly entrusted were for a batch of shorts made for NBC starring "Atom Ant," "Squiddly Diddly," "Secret Squirrel," and "Winsome Witch." As the number of shows began to expand in the mid-1960s, they started searching for a broadening of the parameter of styles. Bill and Joe did not want one graphic look, they wanted to move into lots of different areas. In fact, one of the primary reasons I stayed at the studio for so long and never left was because any time I got an itch to leave, a project would come along that would provide an opportunity to do something I had not tried before.

Very occasionally that itch would be scratched through some freelancing. I did not do very much moonlighting work in those days, but it seemed like whatever extra jobs I took on involved Fred Calvert. One time he had got-

ten connected to a producer named Ken Snyder and the two were working up an idea for an animated show about a female detective. Fred asked if I would go meet with Snyder and maybe contribute some development drawings on spec. I did, and Snyder managed to get a meeting with Fred Silverman, who was then a children's programming executive. We pitched the series to Silverman, who said: "You know, you've created a damn good show, but I'm going to pass on it because I don't think it quite has the guts my programming needs." His programming at that time was directed primarily toward a boy audience. "I don't think I can sell the network on the idea of a girl's adventure," he told us.

Since the work was on spec, I did not get paid anything for my work on the project, but I did not go hungry. Ken Snyder had more credit cards than I had ever seen in my life—he would hold out his wallet at shoulder height and they would tumble down to the floor in one of the plastic accordion card holders—and he knew how to use them. In lieu of pay, he would take Fred Calvert and I out to dinner at various restaurants, using various credit cards.

Back at the home studio, the vast majority of our non-prime-time shows in the years immediately preceding our venture into feature filmmaking were made for syndication, shows like "The Magilla Gorilla Show," "Peter Potamus," and something called "The Hanna-Barbera New Cartoon Series," which starred "Lippy the Lion," "Wally Gator," and "Touché Turtle." But right around the time of *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear* the studio made a concentrated effort to get into the Saturday morning network arena.

Joe appeared in my office yet again one afternoon and said, "What do you think of the title, 'The Hillbilly Bears?'" Clearly, Joe and his group had in mind a take-off on "The Beverly Hillbillies," which was then one of the most popular shows on television.

"That's really catchy," I said. "I think it's a good idea."

"Well, could you do just a lineup of a family of hillbilly bears, just a real quick sketch?"

"Okay, I'll give it a shot."

"A father, a mother, and . . . make it a teenaged daughter . . . and then a little kid, and that should do."

"Okay."

"Good. I have to go to New York," he added. "Could I have it before I get on the plane?"

"Uh . . . when do you get on the plane?"

"This evening."

"O-kay."

"Good." Joe started to leave, and as he was going through the door, he turned his head and threw over his shoulder: "And try putting a little touch of color on it." Then he left. So I got to work, and maybe an hour or two later, right before he was about to leave for the airport, Joe comes back in. "Did you get anything?" he asked.

I handed him the drawings, and he said, "Oh, yeah, that's the general idea. I'll take these with me." And he goes out again.

A couple days later, Joe is back at the studio and he came back into my office. "I'm in trouble," he said.

"Why are you in trouble?" I asked.

"You know that show, 'The Hillbilly Bears?' The network saw those drawings you made and they heard the title, and they just loved it. So they bought it."

"So?"

"Now I have no idea what to do with it!" he said. "I have my work cut out for me."

"I just said, 'Gee, Joe, that's too bad.'" But inwardly I thought, *Well, I've done my part, you sold it, you do something with it.* Of course, Joe and his staff did figure out what to do with the Hillbilly Bears, which became a component in "The Atom Ant/Secret Squirrel Show," along with the title cartoons, "Winsome Witch" and "Precious Pupp." But this was an example of a scenario that happened many, many times over the years. Rarely were there official meetings to sit and devise projects.

As I began to rise within the structure of the studio, I would frequently have someone who was working for me say something like, "You know, I think I've been here long enough, so do you suppose it's time that I could slip in on some of the conferences and meetings you have with Joe?"

I'd always say, "Sure, just follow me around and we'll run into him in the hall somewhere along the way, and he'll say, 'You know, I was thinking . . .'" and it will last for about two minutes." And that's the way it would work. Joe and I seemed to have compatible ways of thinking about things, and we were able to pick up on each other's thoughts pretty easily.

As time went on, I discovered I was acting almost as a "bridge" between what Joe was doing and what Bill was doing at the studio. I was able to help Joe in the development of the shows (I would, on occasion, accompany Joe to New York to meet with the network brass, notably Fred Silverman, who in the late 1960s was the head of children's programming for CBS, though I tried to keep that down to a minimum), and then continue to refine the visual aspect of them for production, working with Bill and Nick Nichols right about up to the point of creating the model sheets for the characters, at which time

Nick would take over. I believe that both Joe and Bill appreciated the fact that I could key pose a scene while I was laying it out, putting in up to a half dozen or so drawings of characters in each scene, which for planned animation was a lot of drawings.

Since I was being asked to take on more and more of a supervisory responsibility, Bill finally said, "Oh, let's just make this official—you are the head of the layout department." It shocked me a little bit because I thought Bick Bickenbach already was serving in that capacity, but apparently Bill decided he'd rather have me head the place. Bick never said anything about my promotion, nor did I ever press him about it. As far as I was concerned, he had his own special place at the studio. The only special consideration I gave him was to take care in terms of how I "cast" him to a project. I would never ask him to take on too much responsibility with a show like "Jonny Quest," which had a strong comic-book visual style because even though he was fully capable of doing a good job on it, it simply was not his thing (though as I recall, he did design the dog, "Bandit"). There were too many available comic-book talents to work on our action adventure shows. At the same time there were so many things coming through the studio at which Bick was just outstanding, that it worked to a much greater advantage for both him and the studio to keep him on those projects.

My ascension at Hanna-Barbera is evidence of what I have always thought about myself, which is that I am a late bloomer. As a very young man at Disney's, I tended to go along with the flow and did pretty much what I was told to do for quite a number of years without showing many signs of self-motivated creativity. In fact, for the first year or so I simply walked around in awe of the people with whom I was working, the Nine Old Men. At H-B, however, I began to assert my creativity in ways that I never had at Disney's.

My background at Disney's came into play whenever they would say, "Let's try to sophisticate our product a little bit more." I had a much better idea of how to do that, especially from a production standpoint, because of my long years with the Nine Old Men. Consequently, I could work easily with the people like Doug Wildey, the comic-book artist who gets credit for being the driving force behind "Jonny Quest."

But I think that was a hallmark of Hanna-Barbera Studios in its heyday: not only did everybody working together make everything look appealing, we also somehow managed to make it look easy.

TAKING ON RESPONSIBILITY BY DESIGN . . . OR OTHERWISE

I get a little frustrated whenever I hear the phrase “the Hanna-Barbera look.” Funny animal characters like Atom Ant or Squiddly Diddly were all well within the traditional anthropomorphic cartoon character look and far removed from the shows that immediately followed, such as “Space Ghost,” “Dino Boy,” or “The Herculoids.” Those, in turn, bear no resemblance to the character of Scooby-Doo. Some of the special programs we did had unique looks all their own.

After I became more heavily involved in supervising the design for shows, I worked very hard to broaden the parameter of styles, not only with the blessings of Bill and Joe, but frequently at their behest. No one at the studio wanted to be tied down to a specific house style, and looking at a sampling of shows from any decade clearly shows that we were not. I suppose what the people who say that are talking about is the early period when all the characters were compromised enough in their design so that they could easily work within the planned animation style.

In designing characters, I would sometimes hear first from the voice track directors, who would come down and ask for any preliminary sketches I had because they were about to start casting the voices. On a few occasions I would wait for them to record the voices and then design the character against the voice. There is one other method of marrying the design to the voice that is successful about 90 percent of the time, and that is for the voice director and me to simply ignore one another. This seems to be a very effective method for comedy shows. The director would cast and record the voices the way he or she saw fit, and I would design the character the way I thought it should look, and they might be totally inconsistent with each other, but when you put them together in the show, the results could be very entertaining.

One of the best examples of this is “Hong Kong Phooey,” a “Kung-Fu” spoof from the early 1970s featuring a masked, floppy-eared dog. Joe Barbera recorded a number of people for the part, but when he got to one in particular, he came in and said, “Listen to this!” I listened to the offbeat delivery of the dog’s lines by Scatman Crothers and immediately agreed with everyone else who had heard them: this was it! How Joe even came up with the notion of Scatman, who was an older African American entertainer now probably best remembered as the old mind-reader from the film *The Shining*, as a candidate for the part I don’t know, but the results were outstanding.

The overall look of our shows changed quite radically in the mid-1960s with shows such as “Space Ghost” and “The Herculoids,” which were designed in large part by another veteran of comic books named Alex Toth. Alex was not only an exceptional comic-book-style artist, he was also highly intelligent. I cannot think of anyone else who came into the industry like he did and just sat down and quickly understood how things were being done in the planned animation system we were using at the time, and be able to adapt in such an intelligent way. For all that, though, working with Alex was not always easy. Even though he adapted to the way of working within limited animation, he frequently disagreed with it, citing what was from his perspective a lack of quality. He had a habit of writing these long, elaborate letters and sending them around the studio. Occasionally these were letters of thanks for some piece of work or other, but more often they were missives blasting you for doing something wrong. I don’t know how many times Alex stormed into Joe’s office, railing about the incompetence of some person or persons in the animation staff and threatening to quit, only to walk out again having been appeased by Joe, and with a new assignment in hand.

From the beginning of his tenure with Hanna-Barbera, the gossip went through the studio that Alex had a volatile temper (which he did) and that he and Doug Wildey did not get along. The back story was that the two of them had worked for an outfit in town called Cambria Productions, which turned out the series “Space Angel” and “Clutch Cargo,” both of which had a comic-book look, but in terms of actual animation were so limited that they almost looked like a story reel. Their distinction was that they superimposed live action mouths over the animated characters. Alex and Doug had gone head-to-head over one of the shows there, and Alex never got over it—in fact, all you had to do was mention Doug’s name and Alex would explode. Doug seemed to have forgotten and forgiven, because it was he who brought Alex in for “Jonny Quest.” I don’t know how they did it, but somehow, they managed to coexist for about the last third of the show. Doug also brought some other

accomplished comic-book talent, including Mel Keefer and Warren Tufts, for "Quest." But Alex was about the best for designing characters who were animatable while still retaining the look of a comic-book hero.

Alex also did some excellent work on a cartoon version of "The Three Musketeers," which seems to have fallen into obscurity. It was not a comedic treatment of the story, but a literal one, almost as though we had taken one of those "Classics Illustrated" comic books and animated it. Alex established a style for cartooning that is still influencing the industry today, and those who make shows like "Batman Beyond" without hesitation give Alex a lot of credit for their inspiration.

If "The Three Musketeers" is not remembered very much today, it might be because it was stuck in the middle of one of the most unusual shows we ever did: "The Banana Splits Adventure Hour." It was unusual because it was in part live action.

It was not the studio's first experience with live action, nor was it mine. A couple years earlier we had produced a version of "Jack and the Beanstalk" starring Gene Kelly, which placed him in an animated world opposite cartoon co-stars. Bill and Joe's association with Kelly went back about twenty years, when they were all at MGM. Their cartoon unit at the studio had created an animated dance number for Gene and Jerry Mouse for the 1945 musical *Anchors Aweigh*, and they had contributed another animated dance sequence for Gene's 1957 film *Invitation to the Dance*. This association between Kelly and Hanna-Barbera would continue on into the 1970s, when Gene hired us to do a couple of brief animated segments for *That's Entertainment II*, which he directed and starred in.

"Jack and the Beanstalk" came about as a result of Gene's having presented a concept for another show to one of the networks, and having it rejected. He was pretty down about it. So when Joe came along and asked Gene if he wanted to get involved with Hanna-Barbera's proposed version of "Jack," Gene jumped at it. (Remember, in 1966 Gene Kelly was not exactly at the height of his stardom, while Hanna-Barbera could get the ear of any one of the three networks whenever they wanted.) With Gene directing as well as starring, we launched the hour-long musical production (and, for the record, Gene did not play Jack, a real little boy did . . . despite a past Oscar nomination, Gene wasn't *that* good an actor).

One sequence involved Gene dancing with an animated princess. For this, Gene choreographed the dance of a young woman, who we then rotoscoped for the animation. Given my experience working on the female leads of sev-

eral Disney features, I had an edge on drawing women and girls over some of the other fellows at the studio, so I did practically all of her key posing throughout the sequence and broke a lot of the work down for them. But when I got the scenes back from animation, I discovered that I had done so much of the work for them, all they did was simply apply inbetween numbers to it and let it go at that. In too many cases they either forgot about or ignored things like the way the animated drapery overlaps the figures when they move, which in a dance is a total requirement. I ended up practically animating it myself.

Working off of the live footage of Gene and his dance partner, I noticed that there was one spot in the music where they would suddenly stop and stand still for a couple of bars, and then they would resume the dance. I could not figure out what was going on. Finally I called the choreographer who was working with Gene and asked him. He said, "Oh, that's supposed to be a lift, but Gene can't do that anymore." Gene was, after all, in his mid-fifties at this point. But I needed to get very specific information on this. I had to know where Gene's feet went when he lifted her and how he lifted her. So I asked the choreographer if he would come over to the studio and show me how Gene was supposed to do this. He complied, and pretty soon there were the two of us, standing in the middle of the hallway, pirouetting around, acting like dancers, so he could demonstrate just exactly what was supposed to take place during that lift. I can only imagine what the sight of a professional dancer trying to bend me into a ballerina's pose in the middle of the hallway at Hanna-Barbera must have been like to anyone walking by.

"Jack and the Beanstalk" aired on NBC in 1967, and was nominated for an Emmy. At the awards ceremony, it was announced as the winner for Outstanding Children's Special, and Gene walked up on stage to accept the award. He thanked the Academy, and went through the usual routine, naming everybody involved in the live-action end of it, and then finished by saying, "And I also want to thank all the other little hands that helped," and then left the stage. Those "other little hands" were all of us who did the animation. Joe, who had been responsible for the show getting made in the first place, just about blew his stack.

Unlike "Jack and the Beanstalk," "The Banana Splits" was not a literal mix of live action and animation, but a show that included live-action segments and wrap-arounds as well as cartoon segments. The one component that everyone seems to remember was "Danger Island," a live-action serial that was shot in Mexico. The director on that was Dick Donner, who went on to

direct *Superman* and the *Lethal Weapon* movies, among many others. Some of the crew that went down to Mexico came back awfully sick with what is colloquially referred to as Montezuma's Revenge.

The origin of "The Banana Splits" can be traced back to Fred Silverman at CBS. Fred had called Joe and asked if he could "borrow" me and bring me to New York and work with a couple idea men who had come to Fred with a concept for a one-hour show set in an amusement park. Joe agreed, and since CBS was paying for the trip anyway, I went. I did not find the idea being pitched a particularly compelling one, but I went along with it and sat down with the guys in New York, making whatever sketches they thought might work to illustrate their ideas, which they could then show to Fred. For his part, Fred seemed to think the results were okay.

After I got back to California, I learned that Fred had pitched the idea back to Joe, hoping that Hanna-Barbera might produce it. Joe, being Joe, said: "No, no, no, that's not the way to go. I have a better idea." At this point in time, Joe was starting to get very adept at picking up on entertainment trends and figuring out how to translate them into animation—or in this case, live action, since his idea was to put real performers into cartoonish-looking costumes. "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In" was a huge hit on television, and it was seeing the fast-paced black-out and sketch format that inspired him to think of these wild and zany costumed characters jumping around and doing crazy things.

Another signature bit for "The Banana Splits" was inspired by something Joe had seen on "The Tonight Show." Johnny Carson had been driving around on a vehicle called an Amphicat, which was a tiny car with enormous tires that was designed to go over just about anything. At one point, Carson had Ed McMahon lie down on the studio floor while he drove over top of him without hurting him (at least McMahon claimed it didn't hurt). The next morning, Joe came in to work and was going on and on about the bit and these little cars, and thought that we had to get them into the show somehow. He got the phone number of the guy who made these things and called him up, asking if he could use them in "The Banana Splits." Not surprisingly, the guy said, "Absolutely!" Next thing we know there are a half dozen Amphicats at the studio, and Joe is saying, "Can you see to it that psychedelic designs are made on these?" This was the era of Peter Max.

Jerry Eisenberg and I got the nod to design the Banana Splits characters, a quartet that was made up of a dog, a lion, a bear and an elephant, wearing hip marching-band-style outfits. However, Jerry was called on by Joe to go above and beyond the role of designer. Once the development art was completed

Joe, as always, hit the road to sell the show to a sponsor, which was the way television worked in those days. He needed a way to convince the advertising men at Leo Burnett in Chicago, who represented Kellogg's, that people running around in goofy costumes would make for a fun half hour. By this point in time the studio had already acquired costumes of some of the classic characters, including Yogi Bear. So all Joe needed was someone as big as a bear, who looked like a bear and who could act like a bear, to put the suit on and make an impression on the ad men.

Jerry Eisenberg filled the bill better than anyone else. (The fact that he could also eat like a bear probably helped.) So armed with Jerry and the Yogi Bear suit, Joe flew out to Chicago for the pitch meeting. As Joe was describing "The Banana Splits," he delivered the proper cue and suddenly Yogi Bear came prancing into the room, going around the table of ad executives, shaking their hands, patting their heads, putting his arm around them, and even, I'm told, sitting on their laps. Before long all these guys in neckties were laughing. Jerry's performance had softened them all up to the point that it helped sell the show to them.

Back in California, with the show sold, Jerry turned in his bear suit and went back to the drawing table, and work began on transforming the designs he and I had come up with into costumes that would be worn by the performers. To do this, Joe brought in the Krofft brothers, Sid and Marty, who had started as puppeteers and then became producers of kids' shows like "H. R. Puffenstuff," and even went into animation themselves. But their specialty was making life-sized puppet costumes. We handed over our designs to them and let them get to work.

Sometime later, Joe popped into my office and said, "Let's go over to the Kroffts' and see how these costumes look." They had a warehouse-like facility in Burbank, and we drove over. As we walked into the place, they had all the costumes lined up in a row . . . and we were staring directly into the belly buttons of these characters. They were enormous! To see their faces, we had to crane our necks! The Kroffts had built them that big in order to accommodate all the kinds of things that Joe was asking for in terms of the crazy antics that the actors inside the suits would be able to perform. When at a later date Joe showed the original costumes to a group of kids to get their reaction, boy, did he get them: they started screaming out of sheer terror!

Thanks to the U.S. space program we eventually got the suits down to a reasonable size. A lot of the materials used to build the final version came from NASA. We also made them cuter. I learned an awful lot about making costumes, something I most likely would never have gotten into had I

remained at Disney's. But that was one of the reasons I stayed with Hanna-Barbera for so long. Joe always had a desire to do all sorts of things, not simply repeat what we had already done, and he kept reaching out to me and let me have a free hand in helping him achieve his desires. He would come in and say, "Can you do this?"—whatever "this" was—and I'd say, "Oh, yeah, sure." Half the time, I didn't even know what he was talking about, but I always agreed, because I knew I would have a lot of fun finding out how things worked. On those rare occasions when I started to scan the industry horizon to see what other opportunities were out there, Joe always managed to dangle in front of me something interesting enough to keep me where I was.

One such time I was thinking, "Wouldn't it be nice to work on a feature again?" It was at a point when a few companies other than Disney were getting into feature-length animation, such as King Features, which made *Yellow Submarine* in England. Right on cue, Joe came walking in and said: "I got it!"

"What?" I asked.

"A twenty-show series of animation and live action mixed from NBC, and we're going to start production on it." The show was titled "The New Adventures of Huck Finn," and it turned out to be a very good project for me, one that allowed me to act as a liaison between the live-action people and Bill's animation people. During production, Bill came in and said, "I want you to go over on the stage and make sure that they don't screw up what we have to do." Bill was never one for mincing words. But that gave me an opportunity to work with the live-action people for six or seven weeks.

The live-action scenes were shot at a small commercial soundstage on Melrose Boulevard in Hollywood, which I imagine cost a lot less than renting space at MGM or Paramount. Upon arriving there, I proceeded straight to the assistant director because I figured if anybody knew what was going on anywhere on the set, it would be him, and I was right. He knew everything that was happening. He controlled the schedules and could tell me why he was scheduling things a certain way. I learned about the simple, economical one-camera method of filming and the techniques they used to get the most out of the day's shoot; I learned the difficulties of shooting a series with three real kids on the set who had to find time to go to the tutor; and I learned how the crew had to resist crossing over into other workers' territories because everybody had to answer to their unions. I had been a member of a union myself, of course, the one governing cartoonists, but since no one else on the stage had ever worked with a cartoonist before, I was able to get away with a few things.

For instance, there was a prop on the set that had to be moved by one of

the kids. It created a bit of a dilemma because it had to look like a painted rock that would fit into the animated background, but at the time the director was ready to film it, the paint job was just a flat blue color. The official solution would have been to get someone from the set painters' union to come down and repaint the rock so that it fit into the background, but everyone was afraid that was going to hold up shooting for the rest of the day, which would have added up to quite a bit of money. So I told them to bring the paint over and I'd paint something, which I did. I said, "Just tell them it's for the animation, and is covered under the Screen Cartoonists." Nothing happened.

I had been going down to the set for about three weeks when I began to notice something strange taking place. I could not quite put my finger on it at the time, but I knew something was subtly different from when I had first arrived to watch the filming. By the fourth week I had figured it out: among the entire crew, there wasn't one single individual that had on a piece of blue clothing. They wore every color but blue. I figured out why, too. The live actors were being filmed against a blue-screen, on top of which the animation would be matted. After several weeks of being surrounded by blue on all sides, the crew simply could not stand wearing anything blue. It had some kind of psychological affect on their subconscious.

One of the more lasting effects that participating in the live-action shoot had on me was learning about live-action structure and how to apply it to the storyboarding of animation, especially from an editorial standpoint. I became convinced that every storyboard man in the animation industry should have a course in shooting live-action footage, because it shows you a whole different way of putting the continuity together. Animation people have a tendency to think in terms of a formal sequential chronology that starts at Sequence One and advances in numerical sequence. Personally, I think this is a big mistake. You don't make films that way, especially since an animated film is pre-edited in the storyboards. At Disney's, we used to start with say, Sequence 7, or Sequence 9, or some sequence in the middle of the film that was dramatically important to the story instead of automatically starting at the very beginning. We would go for any scene that was the best sequence to really give the animators a chance to begin exploring and developing the personalities of the characters. As a result of my Disney experience, I tend to be much freer in the way I look at a script. But too many people working in animation do not stop to think about their film in terms of total scenes, in the same way that live-action filmmakers do. All too often you can see that inability to consider the overall story up there on the screen.

On the subject of storyboarding, an awful lot of today's animation begins

with a written script instead of a storyboard, which some people in the industry decry, but I think the script and the storyboard can coexist quite nicely if you use them in the proper fashion. I believe that the storyboard man should embellish the written script, which lacks the gags that are drawn in on the storyboards. I developed the knack for being able to concoct all these situations and gags and turn them around, and I always enjoyed working on a well-written script. I never storyboarded directly one-to-one with a script; rather I would take a script and work with it in broad strokes. In other words, when I was storyboarding, I was almost like a live-action director working in post-production during the film-editing phase, taking all the filmed scenes and beginning to edit the flow. I would take a script page and play it out and juxtapose things that seemed to flow better from a visual point of view. Every now and then I might take it too far, in which case I would go to the writer—particularly if it was a writer that I respected—and tell him what my intent was and the reason for it. I usually managed to work out something that we both agreed on and we would go from there.

Having said that, I believe there should always be a greater inclusion of designers and artists in the initial creative period, people who have the ability to understand the creative process and be comfortable with it. As a case in point, one time Margaret Loesch, who was then a Hanna-Barbera production executive, had set up a deal whereby she would take about a half dozen writers to New York for a development meeting with the network (NBC in this instance) for an hour-long show for Saturday morning. Margaret loved to gather teams of people together, which was different from the old days when one or two staffers would sit down and cook things up and develop an entire show by themselves.

The goal was to flag the attention of Fred Silverman, who by then was the head of the entire network, not just the children's programming division. Right before they left she called me and said that she would appreciate it if I would go along, and I agreed. So all of us went to New York, and sure enough, Fred showed up. By that point he did not have to—he could have delegated it to a subordinate—but he loved animated fare and decided to take the time to sit in for a couple of hours in this meeting.

The writers went around the room and made their pitch, and in the meantime I'm listening to what they have to say and using it to make little thumbnail sketches, as much for my own amusement as anything else. After about a half hour, Fred suddenly looked up at me and said, "Hey, let me see what you're doing." I didn't even realize that he had seen me drawing. I slid the

pad over to him and he started looking over these thumbnails, and then he started laughing. "This is the show," he said. Then turning to the writers, he added, "From this point on it ought to be easy for you guys, just look at what's here."

I don't think I received any popularity awards from the writers, who had been pitching their hearts out, but Margaret immediately grabbed the drawings and stuffed them in her purse, and the meeting was over.

One series that really showed the importance of working from both a script and a storyboard, from which the gags would be devised, was "The Wacky Races," which was a weekly auto race between a group of wild and bizarre drivers in their equally wild and bizarre vehicles. One was an army tank; another looked like a World War I biplane; yet another was a Flintstone-ish rock vehicle driven by cavemen. "Wacky" did not even begin to describe it!

When the concept for the show first came down, I put Jerry Eisenberg on it and he created probably three-quarters of the vehicular designs that went into that series and about half of the characters. He just had a knack for sight-gags on wheels. Jerry and I worked together on a few of the ideas, but he is primarily the one who made the show look the way it did. The characters of the villain Dick Dastardly and his snickering sidekick Muttley (remember Mugger?) and their car were giving him some trouble, so I gave a few other artists a try on those. In the end, as we were running out of time, I did them myself.

Once the show's cast was completed (or so we thought), Joe met with the consumer products people to go through the show with them. As they were looking at it, somebody in the group suddenly said, "You know, we have no females in this show. Where's the girl?" So Joe got up right then and there, excused himself from the meeting, and came back to me. He explained what had been said, and asked: "Can you put something together real quick, so I can take this thing and show them?" Then he took off and went back to his meeting.

I thought to myself, *You want a female, I'll give you a female!* I sat down and designed the girl and the car, throwing in everything but the kitchen sink. I had eyelashes on the headlights, lipstick on the grille, and a parasol for a roof, and then I loaded it all up with shocking pinks and lavenders and colors like that, and waited for Joe to come back.

When he did, he asked: "You got anything?" I gave him the drawing and he said, "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah," and ran it back to the others. Later he stopped by again and said, "They loved it!"

That was how the character “Penelope Pittstop” was created, along with her car, the “Pink Powder Puff.” Penelope, Dastardly, and Muttley became break-out characters, each one getting their own spin-off shows a season or two later.

Not a bad run for a dog shaped like a vacuum cleaner.

REINVENTING THE TV TOON WITH "JONNY QUEST" AND "SCOOBY-DOO"

Innovation was traditionally a key element of Hanna-Barbera. It was the whole point in the earliest days of the studio, when the whole concept of planned animation was being devised, and the concept of prime-time animation was also quite an innovation. But stylistically, one of the biggest innovations we did was the move to the comic-book style of cartoons, led off by "Jonny Quest."

Doug Wildey had originally brought in the idea of animating the old radio show "Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy" to the studio, and Joe was completely taken with it, particularly after Doug was able to show him that that style of drawing and that comic-book look was entirely producible for television. Joe would enthusiastically declare: "My god, he can draw those characters almost as fast as you fellows draw the other stuff!"

I became involved in that effort to demonstrate how it could be done because, according to Doug, Bill Hanna had sent him all over the studio to find somebody to help him put together a two- or three-minute piece of film to give an indication what the show would look like. He could not find anyone who was on the same page, design-wise. Finally, out of frustration, he went into Joe and complained that things were going nowhere. "Have you gone down to see Iwao?" Joe asked, and Doug said, "No, nobody told me to."

So on instructions from Joe, Doug came walking in one day and we talked about the show and ended up spending about a week together, figuring out just how the show could be done in a way that convinced Joe to commit to a five-minute, fully-rendered piece of footage to show to the network in order to really sell the idea. This was crucial, because we believed that showing them a piece of the final result was the only way they would understand something that new and foreign. Doug used to tell me: "You're the only guy I know in this

business that could go either way," meaning between realistic animation and broad cartoony animation.

While we were working out the design details for a more-or-less realistic adventure cartoon, Joe was revising the premise. The Boy-Scoutish Jack Armstrong concept was set aside and it was bent much more toward the comic strip "Terry and the Pirates." The result was such a nicely balanced show from a story standpoint, and where TV animation was concerned: the idea of a ten- or eleven-year-old boy who was in a position, because of what his scientist father did, to be able to have adventures all around the globe. They enriched the cast by giving him a role model and guardian in the form of "Race Bannon" and then put a little bit of mysticism in there with his friend "Hadji," and then had sense enough to give them a pet dog named "Bandit," which rounded out the cast. There was talk about Jonny's mother, who was not only not represented but was never even referred to, and Joe said, "Just ignore it, we don't need her. Besides, no mother would let her son wander around and do the sort of things that he's doing."

"Jonny Quest" was an example of how sophisticated planned animation had become, particularly in the hands of an incredibly clever layout man like Bill Perez. Bill and another artist named Tony Sgroi were exceptional at figuring out how to reuse drawings without making it look like they were being repeated, by "fielding" them, or presenting them in camera range, in different ways. Between the two of them, they used every bit of the trickery that went into planned animation in the first place and came up with a few new tricks of their own. This way they were able to keep their episodes within the budget, which was already high for an animated television show. Some of the other artists, particularly the ones from the comic-book field, who were not accustomed to the techniques of planned animation, tended to run rampant with the budgets, and the costs of these episodes skyrocketed.

Many people have asked why such a great show lasted only one season, and the reason is very simple: it just cost too damned much to continue to do it at the same level of quality. Money proved to be the thing that accomplished what "Dr. Zin" and all of the show's other villains could not do, which was stop Jonny Quest. When Bill Hanna estimated the price tag for a second season, the network simply said no thanks. Perhaps that is just as well, because that one season of "Jonny Quest," I feel is a highlight of the studio's history.

Because the initial "Jonny Quest" in 1964 worked so well, I've felt that all of the other attempts to bring the show back beyond that first year have been inferior. The first misstep was to make Jonny older. He was eleven in the

original, and by the time of the last series, in the 1990s, Jonny was about thirteen or fourteen years old and had all the teen attitude problems, and on top of that they gave him a friend who was a semi-nubile, fourteen-year-old girl! It became hard to believe that a teenaged boy was really interested in globe-trotting intrigue when a girl like that was hanging around all the time, and that immediately destroyed the concept of the show. Neither Joe nor Bill were creatively in charge of that updated version of "Jonny Quest." After a while, I think Joe just threw up his hands and distanced himself, and so did I.

If "Jonny Quest" was blatantly innovative—there was literally nothing like it on television at the time it came out—another show that appeared in 1969 was much more subtly innovative: its title was "Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!" It was so subtle, in fact, that most people probably still don't realize the impact it had on the television animation industry.

One of the most often-told stories regarding the show is that Fred Silverman got the idea for the name "Scooby-Doo" while on an airplane, listening to Frank Sinatra's recording of "Strangers in the Night." When Old Blue Eyes got to the end and started signing "dooby-dooby-doo," Fred had a brain-storm. To this day, Fred swears by that story, and I won't contest it, because I really don't know. I was not on the plane with him. However, I do know that somewhere in the Hanna-Barbera archives, dating back to the period of the early 1960s, there is a development drawing of a dog character with the name "Scooby" attached to it. It is nothing like our Scooby-Doo, but it is there. I've seen it.

Whatever the truth behind the name, there is no question that Fred Silverman was a key factor in the show's development. During the mid- to late sixties Hanna-Barbera had made the transition from funny animal comedy shows that had 3 five- or six-minute cartoons each to more action-adventure oriented shows that contained 2 ten- or eleven-minute episodes. "Jonny Quest," which was also in the action-adventure mold, was a half-hour single-episode show, but it was on during prime time. So, springboarding off of "Quest," Fred decided that he would like to go into a full half-hour format for Saturday morning. He thought having a show that told a complete story every week would be very innovative, and his preference was to introduce a teenage mystery. Upon hearing the idea, Joe Barbera assigned two young writers, Joe Ruby and Ken Spears, to develop it.

Ruby and Spears were the ones who were responsible for building the structure of the show. The first thing they did was come up with a cast of human characters, all teenagers. Joe (Ruby) and Ken would come to me and describe

their ideas about the characters, and I would design them based upon not only what they described, but also the types of stories they were aiming for, since they were to be considerably different from the Hanna-Barbera norm. We had done adventure shows and action shows and comedy shows, but we had never before done a show where you had to plant clues and ask the audience to follow them along with the characters, so the characters were required to work within the big picture of the concept and the storylines.

Since we were in uncharted territory, the show hit a few bumps during the development phase . . . make that quite a few bumps. Joe and Ken were busting their butts to try and get the thing to work and satisfy all the parties involved—particularly Silverman—and they tried many different approaches. One of the first passes was judged to be too scary for Saturday morning. Another was thought to be too boring. Some of those involved in the process were afraid that taking five or so minutes at the end of the show to unravel the mystery and explain it to the audience would simply lose the kids at home. No matter which direction they went, they kept running into a wall.

Finally Joe Barbera said: "Why don't we do the same thing we did on 'Quest' and put a dog in there? Maybe that will help to enliven the whole structure of the show up a little bit, and it will also give a certain kind of relief to the information of the mystery." Bandit, the dog in "Jonny Quest," had similarly been added fairly late in development.

At first, Joe was talking about a feisty, smart little dog, like an Airedale, that would help the kids solve the mysteries. But after I had designed Shaggy, who was the last of the teenagers that Ken and Joe Ruby had come up with, I asked, "For a change, is it okay if I try a big dog?"

"Well . . . okay," they said.

The biggest dog I could think of was a Great Dane. I started nosing around, looking for some kind of reference since I wanted to know something about the particular species I'd be designing. At that time there was a woman named Eve Imes who worked in the Ink-and-Paint Department, who I found out also bred and raised Great Danes for competition. I asked her to tell me about the breed, and it was like opening a floodgate. She went on and on enthusiastically about these dogs.

What I particularly wanted to know was what made a prize-winning Great Dane, and Eve described all of the characteristics in detail. I selected about five of those characteristics that she felt were very important to a show-dog Dane and then turned around and drew the exact opposite, for the sake of comedy. In other words, if it was important for a prize Dane to have straight,

strong legs, then I drew one with bowed hind legs and limber forelegs that shot out in every direction at once. I knew it was not going to be any kind of realistically rendered dog anyway since I was going to have to half-humanize the head structure to make him animatable.

Ruby and Spears had been talking about how the dog should really belong to Shaggy, more than any of the other kids, so I began picturing all of those "takes" between the two of them, such as the frightened Scooby's jumping into Shaggy's arms. I think deciding that Scooby and Shaggy should operate as a team helped them to get the development of the show back on track. I completed a whole slew of such sketches and showed them to Joe Barbera, and he was surprisingly noncommittal about it. He said, "Yeah, well, we'll see what Fred thinks about it." I was not in the meeting in which Joe Barbera, Joe Ruby, and Ken Spears showed this batch of sketches to Fred Silverman, but I heard that Fred looked at one and pointed to the dog, and declared: "That's the star of the show!"

As the development continued, we started to put the dog into the official presentation, which consisted of development drawings and situation drawings, and little four- or five-minute storyboards. All the while, we kept searching for a title for the show, since the earliest one, "Mystery's Five," related to an early version of the show that included five teenagers in the cast and no dog. Once the dog came into the picture, one of the kids dropped out. Then Fred came running into my office and said, "What do you think about 'Who's S-s-s-s-s-scared?'" I don't recall thinking much of it. But after Fred's fateful plane trip with "dooby-dooby-doo" ringing in his ears, he came back and fed that to the writers and "Scooby-Doo" became the name of the dog (up to that point, one of the names that had been kicked around was "Too Much"). Eventually "Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!"—with an exclamation point instead of the more proper question mark—was accepted as the title of the series, though, frankly, what that was supposed to mean I never quite could nail.

"Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!" was one of six new shows that Hanna-Barbera put on the air in 1969, but I think only a Saturday morning historian could remember what the other five were. It was "Scooby-Doo" that went through the roof. None of us had any indication this was going to happen. All we knew is that our ratings numbers were tremendous. If we ever dropped below a 50 or 60 share, Fred would have a fit! That's how successful the show was.

In the second season of the original run, we began putting in what we called "romps:" sequences that were covered by songs that were specially created for the show, while the characters ran around and chased each other.

These romps were great opportunities for gags, usually cooked up by Joe Ruby and Ken Spears. For instance, Scooby and Shaggy might be running from a monster but they would skid to a stop in a kitchen, where they'd throw on a chef's hat and set a table. The monster chasing them would also stop and sit down at the table, and be served food by Chefs Shaggy and Scooby, who would then take off again. The romps were not totally nonsensical, but they were goofy and had an almost surreal sense of fun, which brought a real freshness to the show.

A number of myths and urban legends have risen up around Scooby-Doo. The most famous one, about which I am asked all the time, is whether Shaggy and Scooby are thinly disguised potheads. Their drug habit, so goes this theory, is why they are always hungry—they have the marijuana munchies. Many people believe this was done as a deliberate joke by the animators, a joke that would only be appreciated by the hippest members of the audience. In recent years, this has virtually been presented as fact in at least one book on the history of Saturday morning cartoons.

Well, in plain English, it's just not true. The creative team, of which I was part, never brought that into play in our thinking about this show. It wasn't until much later, once drug awareness had become much stronger in society, that this rumor began to surface.

I suspect that most of the people who support this theory were not around in 1969, when "Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!" first came out. It was a much more innocent time than today, particularly for television, and doubly for animation. This was before "Fritz the Cat," "Saturday Night Live," and Cheech and Chong, let alone something like "South Park," and you simply did not do drug and scatological jokes in cartoons if you wanted to remain on the air. (Certain sequences of Disney's *Fantasia* and *Alice in Wonderland* were similarly branded as having been drug inspired decades after their creation.)

The fact that Scooby and Shaggy were always hungry was simply an attempt on the part of Joe Ruby and Ken Spears to insert certain idiosyncrasies into their characters (and for the record, drugs of any kind were an anathema to Joe Ruby; he hated them). There wasn't any slyness to it at all; they were just a couple of teenagers with bottomless pits for stomachs. Any parents who have had teenagers in the house can relate. They were also tremendously cowardly (though I have to say, I've always considered Shaggy and Scooby to have had the highest IQs of any of the characters on that show, because only they had enough sense to get the heck out of anyplace that even promised a hint of danger, while the other "smart" ones kept wandering on into it and

getting in trouble!). These characteristics gave you little laughing highlights as a relief from the tedium of solving mysteries.

Looking back at the first couple of seasons, this rationale for the hunger bits clearly hold up, and once we started doing the romps, the business about eating became a chance to throw in some nonsequitur comedy bits into the chases. But it has become more blatant with time, and these days I think it is definitely overused. There is too much dependency on the eating in their characters now, and it makes me a little nervous when I see it.

Another urban legend surrounds the Scooby gang, and this one is even more fascinating because it shows how much people have taken these characters to heart. I've heard that people in the Boston area believe that each of the kids in "Scooby-Doo" was designed to represent a stereotypical student from five of their local colleges. According to this rumor, preppy Fred is from Amherst College; Daphne, whose family is wealthy, is from Mt. Holyoke; Velma, the brain, is from Smith College; Shaggy, the "hippie," is from Hampshire College; and Scooby himself represents University of Massachusetts, which, according to this theory, is the place to find party animals. I have never been to any of these schools, so I cannot speak to the accuracy of the stereotypes, but that is the legend.

While I hate to affect the regional pride of these Bostonians, I have to say that this rumor is just that: a rumor. There is no truth to it. In fact, until all this came up, I don't think I could have *named* five colleges in the Boston area, let alone been familiar enough with them to copy their styles. Besides, the Scooby gang are high school kids, not college students.

In designing the kids, I was thinking in terms of type of personality more than anything else. When Ken and Joe said that Freddy would be a jock type who pictures himself as the leader, even though he's not the brightest of the lot, I tried to visualize that and dressed him for the period. Since I also gave consideration to basic geometric shapes in the designs, I decided that Freddy would best be represented as an inverted triangle or a V shape. As for Daphne, she is just interested in herself and the way she looks and her fashion, and obviously her geometric form suggests the S-curve. Since Velma is the intellectual bookworm of the group, I made her sort of squat and stumpy, and then put horn-rimmed glasses on her. While sketching Shaggy, I was remembering Maynard G. Krebs from the old "Dobie Gillis" television show, who technically was a beatnik, not a hippie. His geometry is that of a mild C-shape, and design wise, I liked the idea of everything hanging on him, the fact that his tee-shirt is many sizes too large. The rest of it was an attempt to ape

the then-current dress codes for teenagers of that time. However, if people want to internalize these characters and imagine them reflecting their particular situation or geographic area, that's terrific. That is truly an indication of the iconic level of "Scooby-Doo" as a property.

As for the design of Scooby-Doo himself, I've already explained my thinking about his having traits opposite to that of a show dog. But even more important than that was my belief that we should never lose sight that he is a *dog* and resist any temptation to make him too anthropomorphic. Over the decades, some animators have taken it upon themselves to humanize him somewhat, and I believe that takes away from his basic character. Scooby is a dog, pure and simple. Even when he stands on his hind legs, he does so the way that a poodle would, though in a much more klutzy, big-dog fashion.

Why has "Scooby-Doo" become so iconic? I wish I knew. So did Bill Hanna, Joe Barbera, Joe Ruby, Ken Spears, and Fred Silverman, because if we *had* known, we would have all sat down and worked up other shows and characters that were equally phenomenal. Part of his popularity might just be his peculiar kind of personality: he's vulnerable in a way, yet he can be forceful and aggressive if he needs to be; he's a coward, yet acts bravely at times; he contains a broad spectrum of different personality traits, yet none of them comes off as contradictory. In that sense, the fact that he is so human in his foibles, and yet so dog-like in his movements, particularly for a cartoon character, seems to be at the essence of his character and his likability.

I don't think there has been a single television season since 1969 when Scooby-Doo in one form or other was not on the schedule. Some of the follow-up shows have been good and some have not. In the latter category, I'd have to put "Scrappy-Doo," which I felt was a crummy idea. It was in a sense going back to the idea of the feisty little dog that we rejected ten years earlier when Scooby was first being developed. But the networks were interested in it. The producer on that show was a guy named Don Jurwich, and he came running down to my office and said, "Can you do a standup of a little nephew of Scooby's?" So I scrawled one out in about fifteen minutes, and he said, "That's good!" He ran back with it, and they bought it. It was the old familiar scenario, except that we were now stuck with Scrappy-Doo! It also opened the door for the entire Scooby family: there was "Scooby Dum" and "Scooby Dee," all variations on Scooby presented as nephews and cousins. We had big Great Danes, little Great Danes, female Great Danes, stupid ones, smart ones, old ones, young ones, it just became crazy.

The Doo family became a pretty incestuous bunch, and Scrappy was definitely not my favorite member of it. For one thing, whereas I really strove

to make and keep Scooby-Doo dog-like, Scrappy-Doo was a return to the anthropomorphic kind of characters that had been the staple of the early Hanna-Barbera. He walked around on his hind legs and had a big dog's head. With his obnoxious personality, I considered him to be an undersized monster more than anything else. A somewhat similar thing happened to the character of Goofy over at Disney's. He had originally been a dog—in fact, his first name had been "Dippy Dawg"—and he was a stylized character, complete with droopy pants and bad posture. But then they started to turn him into something that represented a human being for all those "How to Do . . ." cartoons that showed him playing sports or driving on the freeway or engaged in some other kind of human everyman activity. For some reason, Marc Davis always pointed a finger at Art Babbitt as the one who was responsible for that transformation. I'm not sure what the basis of the charge was, because Jack Kinney was the director of most of those shorts, but Marc was insistent. He used to grouse: "Art turned him from a wonderful cartoon character to a monster! He turned him into a human being with a dog's head!"

Going back to Scooby, for a while he and the gang were meeting a variety of 1970s-era guest stars, such as Don Knotts, Sonny and Cher, and Dick Van Dyke. I oversaw the process of turning these celebrities into cartoon characters, all of whom provided their own voices, which is ironic since I've always considered myself a pretty lousy caricaturist. I was certainly not as up on the skill as a Disney artist named Thornton Hee—he signed his work "T. Hee"—who specialized in them. A true caricature was the sort of thing that Al Hirschfeld did so brilliantly, using a lot of symbols in place of actual features. What we were doing was more of a cartoon portrait of someone rather than a caricature, and I tried to get other people to do the sketches, though I always ended up finishing them. But many people have complimented me on the likenesses, so my sense of inferiority as a caricaturist aside, it must have worked.

One of the best Scooby spin-off shows in my opinion was "A Pup Named Scooby-Doo," which I thought was quite well done. In it, the kids were grade-school age, and the design style was quite a bit different, but it worked. Changing things does not always work. Some of the more recent Scooby-Doo shows and videos have changed the look and the style of things in an attempt to freshen up the franchise, but change for its own sake is never a good idea. A lot of times the people behind these versions are afraid to broach the changes to me because they think I'm too protective about keeping the integrity of the old shows. Naturally, I would like to see integrity of these characters upheld, especially on the dog and Shaggy, since they are fully developed characters

that do not require a great deal of further exploration. But putting these characters into situations that would be better suited for something like "Jonny Quest" or a Marvel Comics type of property is a mistake. It might make for an entertaining adventure show, but it simply is not Scooby-Doo.

I can remember the point at which the sheer force of Scooby's popularity really sank in for me. I can no longer remember the year I saw this, but at some point *TV Guide* ran an article about a college student who was preparing for an all-night stint to get ready for one of his finals. He had his espresso coffee ready so he could stay awake and he had his all-night study routine planned out. His schedule contained only one break: a half hour of relief time so that he could watch "Scooby-Doo" on television.

Around that same time I had finished a limited edition piece of animation art that showed Scooby charging into the "camera," chased by the entire first season group of villains. When I read the article and realized just how popular "Scooby-Doo" was, I ran to the consumer products people and said, "Hey, you've got to take that art cel and make a poster of it so you can pump out thousands of them." They did, and not long afterward they took them to an animation art show that was taking place at the Javitz Center in New York. I went along and was stationed in the booth during the show. Every time somebody would come by and make a big purchase, I would do a quick sketch of whatever they requested. Soon a crowd began to gather around me every time I was setting up to make a sketch. Disney also had an exhibition booth at the show, and two or three of their guys were hovering around, trying to figure out what was causing the mob to assemble.

When we brought out stacks of these Scooby posters, the people started lining up to buy them. We finally worked out a routine where the customers would pay for them at the cash register, pick up the receipt, and then get back into *another* line so that I could sign each one of them. I don't know how many of these posters we sold, but I know it was in the hundreds.

Consumer products, by then, had become a major division of the studio and the various licensees required a huge amount of artwork on Scooby, and I was responsible for creating a lot of it, style guides and the like. It was something I enjoyed doing and I was given the freedom to do just about anything with the characters that I wanted. They figured I knew the characters, which I certainly did, and knew what they would and would not do and what sort of attitudes they presented, and so they accepted the material I was turning out without question. I just made drawings of Scooby, the same way I would if I were posing an animation scene.

Every now and then I hear myself referred to as the "creator" of Scooby-Doo, which really is not accurate. I am the designer of Scooby-Doo, and I suppose you could say one of his "fathers." Title semantics aside, though, there is no question that "those meddling kids and their dog" have played a huge part in my career.

INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

By the time “Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!” went on the air, organizational changes had already taken place at Hanna-Barbera Studios. In 1967 the studio was acquired by Taft Broadcasting. The effect of that was not earth-shaking: Joe Barbera continued doing what he was doing as the president of the company, and Bill Hanna remained the senior vice president. Even though the order of their billing in the studio’s name might indicate that Bill was the top man, Joe had always been in charge, at least from an organizational standpoint. The official story as to why the studio was called “Hanna-Barbera” instead of “Barbera-Hanna” is because Bill had won a coin toss decades earlier. But periodically they would switch their actual producer/director credits to put Joe’s name first.

The most noticeable change from Taft’s having taken over as far as I could see was that there was now one more level of approvals before any show could move forward.

I had by then already experienced the expansion of my duties beyond the level of layout supervision. I was finding myself deeply involved in the development of new shows, working through the kickoff process and then handing them off once the associate producer had been assigned. In a very real sense, I would simply leave the project because the show was then the associate producer’s problem. (And while Bill and Joe were still the officially credited producers at this point in time, the individual shows would be handled by associate producers like Lew Marshall, Alex Lovy, Art Scott, and Paul Sommer—in the television lingo of today, they would be considered “showrunners.”)

Bill and Joe and Nick Nichols expressed concern that I receive the proper credit for the kind of work that I was doing. They thought calling me a “co-producer” was appropriate. But not all of the associate producers, particularly those who had been with Hanna-Barbera long before I joined the organiza-

tion, felt the same sense of appropriateness. After all, some of them, such as Lew, had been working with Bill and Joe since the MGM days, and I was still technically a new guy. What's more, I was younger than most of them (it was like the experience at Disney's all over again!), so a few of them wondered why I was getting credits that were above them.

I talked with Bud Getzler, our COO, about the situation, and his personal opinion was to do nothing and let them all grouse. I did not want that to happen, since I had to work with these people on a daily basis, and Bud did not. So Bud and I finally arrived at the title "creative producer," which at that time was unheard of—nobody in town was a creative producer. But Bud was one of those executives whose word and handshake were as good as any signed contract, so creative producer I became. The title's uniqueness was driven home when a Hollywood trade paper ran a review of one of our shows—I can't remember which one—and ran through the credits, mentioning that so-and-so did this on the program, and such-and-such did that, and when they got to me, the reviewer wrote: "Iwao Takamoto is the creative producer—whatever the hell that is." That seemed to sit better with the guys and peace was restored, since it no longer looked like I was an upstart encroaching into their territory.

Sometimes I wish I had saved that review. The fact is I'm guilty of not saving an awful lot of things throughout my career that I probably should have. I'm notorious for throwing things away, in part because I just don't like clutter. Clutter, however, seemed to like me. At any given point I was involved with so many projects at once and had so many things in my room that my office was in a perpetual state of clutter until the day would come when I would decide I'd had enough of it, and start weeding things out in order to be able to move around. With so much activity going on all the time, it never dawned on us we might someday want some of the stuff we were clearing out.

I had another reason for trying to keep my room, particularly my walls, free of sketches and drawings. At its height, during the 1970s and 1980s, Hanna-Barbera's chief competition was itself. We nearly always had shows on all three networks on Saturday morning (and it almost seems like any discussion about the days when there were three and only three television networks should begin, "Once upon a time . . ."). Any time I kept some of the artwork from the shows I was helping to develop up on my walls, I discovered that people from each of the networks would drop by and actually peek over on my desk and look around, and sometimes leaf through art that had been set aside. "Oh, is this something for the other guys?" they casually ask, knowing full well it was. As if I didn't have enough going on in my room, I was

becoming the place where the network reps could go to see what their competition was up to. After I figured that out I really backed off, and to this day, even though we no longer shape the programming on the traditional networks, I don't put artwork on the wall.

Not long after Taft took us over, another change occurred within the studio that would have an enormous impact not just on us, but on every television animation company in town: the use of overseas production houses. At the time it was simply a way of getting the work done when we needed it and for a reasonable cost. We had no way of knowing back then that the practice would revolutionize the entire industry.

The first "overseas" studio used for cartoons was not overseas at all, just a ways south of Hollywood in Mexico. The animation work for "Rocky and Bullwinkle" and such syndicated shows as "Underdog" was done there. For us, it might have been a result of having shot "Danger Island" in Mexico, through the Churubusco Studios, and having become acquainted with the talent down there. But by the late 1960s, Bill was sending work down to Mexico on a spot basis, so the day came when he asked me if I would go down to Mexico City for a while to keep an eye on a particular project.

Remembering the people who had come back ill from the "Danger Island" shoot, I was nervous about contracting the same affliction, so the first person whose advice I sought out was a layout artist named Mike Arens, whose wife was from Mexico City. Mike asked where the studio was going to put me up for my stay, and I gave him the name of the hotel, which was a real top-of-the-line establishment. "Oh, well, if you stay there, you're not going to have any problem," he said. "It's totally secure . . . of course, you're going to have to use bottled water to brush your teeth and not the tap water."

This was totally secure?

Fortunately, I quickly discovered that the safest place in town to eat seemed to be the commissary at the Churubusco Studios. Not only did I find the place attractive, but the man who was the director of the Mexican film and entertainment industry would also stop in for a bite occasionally. He was a very gracious fellow, who for some reason thought I was some kind of a big shot. I would also see another government official there fairly often, and this fellow made an even greater impact on me. Just watching him eat was a spectacle. He would always start with a bowlful of shucked oysters, and then squeeze lemon after lemon into the bowl until they were swimming in the juice, and then devour them. Shaggy or Scooby could not have done it better.

The roadside food carts that seemed to be everywhere throughout the city

were even more tempting than the menu at the Churubusco commissary. Since we were working with one main animation studio and several smaller ones, I would spend a lot of time in a car in transit between them, constantly passing these little stands that produced incredibly enticing aromas. But no matter how good the food looked or smelled, I just could not take the risk.

Over the years I would be dispatched to Mexico two or three times, and one of those times I dragged Nick Nichols down with me, which was a real adventure. Nick was a buttoned-down type of guy who thrived on routine, and he hated traveling to foreign countries. The poor guy was totally lost down in Mexico. But we had to check on the work that was being done, because given both the distance and the language barrier, there was always the possibility for error. One time I was walking through the layout department and saw an artist designing a background. It was very competently done, except that the setting in question had a sign in it, and the writing on the sign was in Spanish. That sort of thing would happen frequently (and apparently it still does with overseas studios).

If you pay close attention to the credits of the second season of “Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!” you will read a lot of Latin names. This reflects our employment of the Mexican production house and others in South America that Bill scouted out to do the work. Finding these places was not particularly difficult. The animation industry being what it is, if you find one studio, you easily can find two others that somebody from the first place has a connection to. If you contact an agent about one studio, he immediately jumps on it and the next thing you know, three other agents are contacting you about other shops. Overall, these Latin American artists were hard workers and were quite facile in the craft of animation. The average workday would start at about 9:00 and last until maybe 8:00 in the evening, with a break in the middle of the day for lunch and a siesta.

The first of our shows that had complete overseas participation was “The Funky Phantom,” which was structured along the lines of “Scooby-Doo” in that it featured a cast of teenagers who travel around in the company of a comedic sidekick. In this case the sidekick was the ghost of a Revolutionary War patriot. Neither the series nor the character (whose name was “Muddlemore”—“Mudsy” to the kids) ever joined the pantheon of H-B classics, like “The Flintstones” or “The Jetsons” or “Scooby-Doo,” but it was a fun show for the time.

Hanna-Barbera had purchased a couple companies down in Sydney, Australia, to take care of the actual production duties, everything beyond pre-production, scripting, and voice recording. Since I was working more closely with Joe in the pre-production area, I handed out design assignments for the

episodic character designs for the show. Meanwhile, Bill Hanna went down under to personally oversee things for a couple months, until the satellite studio got off the ground. Since there was not the language barrier that we had experienced with the Latin American studios, everything should have gone smoothly.

Note the words *should have*.

This happened to be right in the period when the term “runaway production” was very much on the surface in Hollywood. Runaway production was the practice of sending a film crew to a foreign country because it was cheaper, and it had become an issue due to all the Westerns that were being shot all over the world, everywhere, in fact, except in California. None of this had been a problem for us up to that point in time because we had only been sending bits and pieces of shows out of the country. But with “The Funky Phantom” that changed, and now the entire show was being produced out of the United States.

It did not take long before the cartoonists union got wind of this fact, and they immediately clamped down on all of its members, instructing them not to pick up their pencils or touch anything on the show because it was going overseas. This ruling did not affect me directly, since by this point I was considered management.

Shortly after Bill had formally asked me to become the layout and design department head I got together with the business agent for the union, a fellow named Lou Appet. The discussion came down to one basic question: did Lou still want me to attend union meetings? Lou responded succinctly: “I don’t *think* so.” Immediately I went on honorary withdrawal from the union, which meant I was still technically a member, but a nonparticipating one. But that was only half of the story. The other half was that overnight I had managed to join the studio’s “suspect” group, which consisted of Bill, Joe, and Nick Nichols. There was always some kind of conflict because we would habitually do whatever kind of work we felt like doing. Each of us would carry out duties that the union was supposed to have jurisdiction over; Joe would write scripts, Bill would write exposure sheets, I would usually draw whatever needed to be drawn, and so we were perennially under some kind of question.

At that particular time, though, the problem was more severe than just suspicion: I was ready to assign out the work on that show but because of the union’s edict, there wasn’t anybody to whom I could assign it! I got a frantic phone call from Bill in Sydney. “What am I going to do?” he shouted. “I’ve got this studio set up, I’ve hired the layout men, I’ve hired the staff of anima-

tors, I've hired all of these people and they're sitting here waiting and eager to go to work, and I don't have any character models!" The truth was, he had the lead models because I had done those myself, but he was lacking the models of the characters who would appear in each episode—the "guest stars," as it were.

There seemed to be only one solution. I heard myself telling Bill, "Don't worry, I'll get them down to you. I'll do them over the weekend and send them down to you." I'll rephrase that: *Like a dummy, I heard myself telling Bill . . .*

At that time I was still too young and energetic to know not even to suggest it. So for the next thirteen straight weeks I would spend practically every waking hour of the entire weekend designing the bank of models for that particular episode, and then ship them down to Sydney on Monday. So the show went on. It nearly killed me in the process, but it went on. I think that was the only time I was glad to see one of our series canceled after only one season.

Bill eventually came back from Australia, of course, and dispatched Lew Marshall to go down and take over for him, supervising the production. The production model we used on "The Funky Phantom" would increasingly become the norm as we bought into other studios in places like the Philippines and Formosa. Strangely enough, one of the people who remained skeptical of this new production arrangement was Joe Barbera.

I discovered this one day as Jerry Eisenberg and I were coming back to the studio from lunch, and Joe pulled his Cadillac up beside us. "Hey, let's go for a little ride," he said through the window. Jerry and I start to get in, but he looked at Jerry and said, "Not you." So I got into his car and we pulled away, leaving poor Jerry standing there on the sidewalk. After we drove around a little bit, Joe parked and turned to me. "What I really wanted to do, out of earshot from anyone," he began, "was get your frank opinion of all this going-foreign crap."

"Well, Joe, because of all the shows that the networks have been buying up, things are getting spread pretty thin in terms of the talent pool here," I told him. "We're literally scraping the bottom of the barrel for talent. So my opinion is that no matter where we go, whatever country, the top-of-the-line artists that we find there are going to be a heckuva lot better than the bottom of the barrel over here."

Joe thought about it for a while and then said, "Yeah, I think you've got a point." And that was that. Joe was nothing if not pragmatic.

Since that time, though, the decision to use overseas talent and studios has remained controversial. In fact, I think there has been more concern over

this in more recent years than there was at the time. While I have to enter a plea of guilty to at least abetting Bill Hanna in fundamentally changing the way television animation is done . . . or at least *where* it is done . . . I also have to stress that it was not so much a matter of wanting to send work overseas in the early 1970s as it was a case of figuring an efficient system for delivering material in a time of enormous demand for it. Today, reliance on overseas production is virtually a given in TV, and the methodology has greatly improved over what was available to us back then. These days producers have the advantage of better Xerography, the ability to send hardcopy visuals via faxes, and email communication. The artwork coming from the overseas studios, particularly the Asian studios, has increased as well, especially in relation to animated shows that are based on comic-book adventure material. When you think in terms of the volume of work that they are producing, the output is as good, and in some cases better, than what we would be able to do here.

Where these studios fall off entirely, in my opinion, is on the kinds of shows that have had such long life, which were produced during the sixties and the early seventies. Shows like “Scooby-Doo” and those that go all the way back to the theatricals of the fifties, such as “Tom and Jerry.” It is simply asking too much of the Asian artists to be able to match that kind of animation, not so much in terms of the craft, but in terms of the entertainment essence of the shows. They don’t understand American humor. They can’t quite grasp the subtleties. It’s like asking them to understand Vaudeville.

Of course, asking an artist, any artist, who did not play a crucial part in the creation of a particular character or set of characters to pick up those characters and run with them is also risky, even if they do understand Vaudeville. The Tom and Jerry shorts that MGM contracted from Chuck Jones in the 1960s were not particularly successful, as Chuck himself later admitted. The Jones style of comedy was just too different from the Hanna-Barbera style for it to work, and he was never able to reestablish that relationship that Bill and Joe had instilled in the characters, which was really the foundation of the shorts.

With so much going on for the children’s audience, Bill and Joe decided to take the plunge back into prime-time animation with a more adult-oriented show called “Where’s Huddles?” which had been backed by Fred Silverman at CBS to run as a summer replacement series (a form of show that does not exist anymore). There were only about ten episodes of “Where’s Huddles?” which was set against the world of pro football.

“Huddles” was one of those times that I was enlisted to go to New York

with Joe and the writers to help sell the show to the network. We were still having difficulty settling on the look for the lead character, Huddles. During one morning meeting Joe and I were having with Fred in his office, the name Walter Matthau came up as a potential visual source. Matthau was at the height of his popularity at that time, both in comedies and dramatic films. Fred liked that idea, so Joe asked me if I could come up with some designs that would lean in the direction of Walter Matthau by the next morning.

As I have already mentioned, I do not consider myself a good caricaturist, but I gave it my best shot, whipping up a bunch of drawings back at the hotel. The next morning we took them into Fred's office, and he looked at them and said, "Yeah, that looks pretty good." But he decided to test it. He walked out into the hall and grabbed the first secretary who happened to walk by, took her back into his office, and showed her the drawing. "Who's that?" he asked.

"Oh, that's Walter Matthau," she said.

Then Fred took a whole stack of drawings and spread them all over the floor and on the couch on his office. This was something Silverman habitually did, even in the first-class sections of airplanes. He started putting together his own focus group made up of secretaries, other vice presidents, and whoever he could grab walking by his office. They would walk in and look at the sketches, laugh, and say, "Oh, that's nice, that's a good one of Walter Matthau."

I was thinking that maybe my skill at likenesses wasn't as bad as I thought. In fact, it might even have been *too* good. After a half dozen or so people recognized the Walter-likeness right away, Fred turned to Joe and asked: "Do you think we're in trouble? Will we get sued by Walter Matthau's people?"

In a typical act of Barbraism, Joe casually replied, "Don't worry about it. We'll take care of it."

After the meeting, we gathered all of our pitch materials up off of Fred's furniture and carried it back to the elevator. On the way down, Joe—who moments before in Fred's office had been the picture of reassurance and confidence—turned to me and said, "Do *you* think we're in trouble?"

I said, "Joe, have you ever seen what animators do to model sheets?" I knew from experience that sometimes animators would take a character model that was supposed to look like Walter Matthau and the result on screen would be closer to Walter Brennan.

He thought about that for a moment and then said, "Yeah, we're okay."

We never heard from either Matthau or any of his people about "Where's Huddles."

With the character now in place, I preceded to produce a half-hour animated, which is a story reel that gives an idea of what the show will look like, as the pilot. In the process I did about three-quarters of the drawing on it myself.

"Where's Huddles?" had its brief run in 1970. It was followed by yet another prime-time sitcom called "Wait Till Your Father Gets Home," which was aimed more for the television audience who might also be watching "All in the Family" or "Love, American Style," a show to which writers Ray Allen and Harvey Bullock also contributed.

Some people seem a little surprised that we ventured into such areas, but the truth is, throughout my career at Hanna-Barbera, we never consciously made things "for kids." We made them because they were entertaining. If we were going to do something, we did it, and we did not worry about whether it was going to have such a tremendously high appeal to kids. If the kids watching it didn't quite get what was going on because it was over their heads, they'll reach for it, because kids do that. There was an attitude of freedom that all of us felt in those days, as compared to what we have today. These days, networks don't allow the writers of children's programs to have the same kind of creative freedom. The PC era has edited them. Cartoon comedy and action is now seen as "violence." The unfortunate thing about that is it causes the people creating today's cartoons to increasingly turn toward scatological humor as a replacement.

"Wait Till Your Father Gets Home" was yet another example of a show being slid my way by Joe Barbera. After the script for the pilot had been written, he assigned a storyboard artist to it. The man in question was an old-timer who was not as well versed in the sitcom format. He got through about a third of the script and then turned it back into Joe with notes scrawled all over it, reading things like "This is terrible!" and "How can you possibly do this in animation?" The emphasis on dialogue and jokes instead of visual gags seemed to throw him. So Joe called me in and said, "Could you take a look at this? What do you think of all these notes." What I thought was that figuring out how to do the script in animation is precisely what Joe was paying the other story artist for, and I told him so. "Well," he replied, "would you mind just taking it and doing it?"

"Sure."

Here we go again.

I storyboarded the entire script, adapting the style developed by an artist named Marty Murphy, who was freelancing for us. Marty was a unique guy who had done cartoons for *Playboy* Magazine and had a distinctive style. He

had a distinctive way of working, too. He would watch television and draw at the same time, and then come in with a whole stack of things that we would have to rummage through. It was sometimes a matter of picking a drawing that seemed to lean in the right direction, and then modifying variations of it using little hunches that he had instilled in his sketches. I tried to retain as much of his styling as possible with the finished models.

For the layouts, based on my refinements of Marty's designs, I brought in the Japanese artist Takashi—he only used one name—who looked at the style we had developed for the characters and came up with a unique idea for the backgrounds. "Why don't we forget all the detail in the background of this and just make a floor line by throwing a rug down so the characters have something to walk on?" he said. I thought it was a good idea, so Takashi jumped on it and rendered the backgrounds in a sparse style. Once the show sold I was no longer involved in it, because the production was done in Australia. I did, however, have the satisfaction of hearing from Marty after the show began to air, expressing pleasure and a little surprise at the amount of integrity to his initial designs that we were able to sustain in styling the characters. My only regret about working with Marty Murphy was that I was never able to make it to any of the annual homemade chili-and-beer lunches he would throw at his home.

With all the television activity going on at this time, my attention was also being pulled into a different direction: I was increasingly getting caught up in a very special spiderweb, one spun by a gentle arachnid named Charlotte.

FALLING INTO "CHARLOTTE'S WEB"

The path that *Charlotte's Web* took in getting to the screen had so many twists and turns that it might have been called *Tangled Web*.

It all started with a millionaire named Edgar Bronfman, who was dabbling in the movie business. His son, Edgar Jr., seemed to dabble a little bit better: for a while he ran Universal Studios. But Ed senior had the rights to E. B. White's beloved book and wanted to make an animated film of it, which back then in the pre-digital era, was about the only way to do it.

The first pass at the project had been done by Gene Deitch, an American animator whose base of operations was set up in what was then Czechoslovakia. Deitch's and Hanna-Barbera's paths had crossed once before, somewhat indirectly, when MGM had hired Deitch's studio to create new "Tom and Jerry" shorts only a couple years after they fired Bill and Joe. Deitch's versions of Tom and Jerry were at least within the ballpark as far as design was concerned, but in terms of humor, personalities, and movement, they were far afield from the originals.

Gene's studio did a lot of concept art for *Charlotte's Web*, but the results did not seem to fit with the setting of the book. The story is set on a farm in New England, and Deitch tended to work in a rather stark European style. Those concept sketches really seemed to discourage Ed Bronfman, who went around looking for another studio. He ended up bringing it to Joe.

Charlotte's Web was to be a different kind of feature than those we had done in the 1960s, which starred Yogi Bear and the Flintstones. Those had been part of a general trend that existed at that time of expanding popular television shows into theatrical features. *Charlotte* had to be developed from scratch. Joe hired Earl Hamner Jr.—the man who later became famous for creating "The Waltons"—to do a script, and Earl did a marvelous job. His screenplay did not quite have the sting that the book had, which concerned

a caring spider's attempt to save a young pig from the slaughterhouse, but he instilled the story with kindness and warmth. The Sherman Brothers—Robert B. and Richard M., who had taken Oscars for their score for *Mary Poppins*—were signed to write the songs. I found the Shermans to be wonderful, warm men, and delightful to work with, as was the music arranger that they brought in with them, Irwin Kostal. I greatly enjoyed being around them all.

Joe then set about casting the voices, and he assembled quite a distinguished group of actors. In addition to a few of our studio regulars, like Don Messick and John Stephenson, Joe brought in Debbie Reynolds, Agnes Moorehead, Rex Allen, Martha Scott, Henry Gibson, and Tony Randall, who was signed to play Templeton the rat. I did not have a lot of contact with the actors, since Joe was handling the recording sessions, though I did get to know Henry Gibson, who played Wilbur the pig, who would wander down to my office on several occasions. And while I only had a fleeting exposure to our star, Debbie Reynolds, I have to say that she did a helluva job voicing Charlotte.

The truth was, I think I was more starstruck being around Irwin Kostal and the Shermans than any of the actors!

While the voices were being recorded, work was progressing on the storyboard. Bill Hanna reserved a room to pin up all the storyboard panels on the wall, so you could chart the story by walking through the room—the way it was done at Disney's.

I was starting to oversee the designing of the characters for the film. Having become taken with Garth Williams's illustrations from the book, I decided to use a similar style of drawing for the designs.

I handled the designs for the characters of Charlotte, Templeton, and Fern, the little girl, myself. Templeton was relatively simple since he was a rat and the villain of the piece, and the two seemed to go together. I drew him with that hunched stance that one associates with rodents when they stand on their hind legs and brought up his shoulders, so he would look even sneakier. Then I gave him Fagin-like arms and claws, which added to his personality.

For Charlotte, however, the challenge was to create an appealing character out of a spider. The way I approached it was to take the basic silhouette and the proportions of a spider's body structure, keeping it very simple, and then concentrated on finding a way to take advantage of her large eyes to make her sweet and feminine-looking. Obviously, she was not designed realistically, since in addition to her eyes she had to have a face capable of both expression

and dialogue delivery. The results, I believe, were successful. An artist named Moe Gollub was a tremendous help in designing the cast of characters for the film, of which there were quite a few, both animal and human.

Everything was going smoothly on *Charlotte's Web* and the story panels were starting to cover the walls of Bill's story room, and then one day Joe walked in to take a look at the progress so far. He took it all in, and then went to his next destination: my office.

Stop me if you've heard this one before . . .

"Have you seen any part of that storyboard?" Joe asked as he strolled in.

I was not completely up on it because by then my function at the studio was primarily to get a project on the launching pad and then walk away once it was up and running and move on to the next launch. Others were working on the boards at that point. But Joe started talking about the film and how he saw it coming together, and then he went away. A little later, he came back, talked some more, and left again. After about three of these little conversations, he finally said, "Why don't you just take this thing over?"

Before long I was taking down all the story drawings from the walls and re-doing the whole damn thing, as well as overseeing all of the new storyboards. In this endeavor, I was fortunate to have a designer named Paul Julian helping me. Not only was Paul an outstanding painter, he was the perfect person for the project because he was quite familiar with New England, particularly its architecture and terrain. He knew about the rocky soil that made up this part of the country, and how the farmers took advantage of it to build rock walls. Paul was also familiar with the practicality of the New England mindset: for example, farmers in that region would frequently build barns against the side of a hill or cliff, so that they only needed to erect three walls instead of four. It was this sort of detail that contributed immensely to the ambient look of the picture.

In addition to his knowledge of New England and talent as a painter, Paul's long experience in creating backgrounds for animation proved to be invaluable. For instance, he would do a study of the grandfather's cabin and it would not be done on a single layer, but rather in four or five layers, looking more like something that an architect might do. In addition to his own creative design work, he supervised the team of background painters on the film.

Since I was re-directing the story through the storyboards, I became the official co-director on *Charlotte's Web*, along with Nick Nichols, who was handling the production. In a sense, we were operating the way Joe and Bill always had. I would go into Nick's office and play out the story for him, explaining exactly what I was after, and then he would take it and time it out.

Charlotte's Web had a particular challenge in the layout in that about 90 percent of the story took place within a small geographic area encompassing the farm, the farmhouse, and the pig pen where Wilbur lived. I had to block out a floor plan that was based upon all the business that took place throughout the majority of the script, pinpointing where the pen had to be situated and where to stage crucial scenes. One of these was the one in which Wilbur receives the horrible news from the sheep that the only reason his owners want to take him to the county fair that was taking place was to fatten him up and turn him into ham. In staging this scene I wanted the horrified Wilbur to walk backward and try to get as far away from this sheep delivering this grim revelation, until he was crowded up against the opposite end of his confined area in front of the barn where the Goose was sitting on her eggs. There, she was able to give Wilbur some words of comfort regarding his future. It was an important and emotionally charged scene that was very difficult to stage since it was taking place in a very cramped setting. I structured the action on diagonals within this small enclosed space, and it worked out quite well geographically.

The other characters in the farm had to share this same limited space, including the Goose, who was sitting on her eggs right over Wilbur's space, and Templeton, who had to have his own space from which he could operate, because I wanted to use a lot of movement in between all of these characters in order to loosen up the dialogue that came from the book. White's book was not filled with a lot of action, but animation demands action to be interesting, so I used these kinds of locations and had the characters climbing around them just to give a sense of movement.

Another of the challenges in production, though this one fell more under Nick's jurisdiction than mine, was that within our entire animation staff at the studio, probably fewer than a dozen were really up to classic Disney-style feature animation work. It simply was not the style that Hanna-Barbera usually asked of its artists. But there was a core group there who were up to the task. Nick was able to use old hands like Ken Muse and Irv Spence, who certainly had no difficulty meeting the demands of a feature, as well as some former Disney animators like Hal Ambro and Jerry Hathcock.

Jerry Hathcock had been one of the artists Bill and Joe picked up from Disney's when they went into television in the late 1950s. He was a solid, competent journeyman animator who at Disney's had the disadvantage of standing in the shadow of artists like the Nine Old Men. When he got to Hanna-Barbera, he found himself in the shadow of Ken and Irv. While he was not as refined a draftsman as Irv Spence or Hal Ambro, Jerry was able to provide

the kind of skill that *Charlotte's Web* required. As I recall, he animated most of Templeton's song at the fair himself.

One of the delights of the film was having the opportunity to meet Preston Blair, who had been a top animator at Disney's, where he did marvelous work on the "Sorcerer's Apprentice" segment of *Fantasia*, and later at MGM, in Tex Avery's unit. It was Preston who had animated those suggestive dance numbers for Avery's "Red Hot Riding Hood" cartoons.

Bill had brought Preston in to storyboard one of Charlotte's songs, during which she spins her web for the first time. The problem was, Preston was an animator first and foremost, not a conceptual type of artist. What's more, he was on the verge of retirement. The way he played the scene on the boards was pretty pat and conventional, even dated, and right from the beginning I could see that it was not what I wanted. But since Bill had hired him, I felt he deserved the chance to complete the scene. Besides, I was having such a good time with him, frequently going to lunch with him and just getting to know him, that I didn't worry about the work he was doing. He was such a nice guy that I felt it was well worth Bill's having called him in just spending the time with him!

Once he had finished, though, I went to Takashi and talked to him about the song. We kept Preston's opening, which was an establishing shot showing the sunset and the animals all going to sleep, but from that point on Takashi got the idea of spinning the web on the screen abstractly, with the lines moving across a blank screen, enhanced by dew drops on the lines. It worked out quite well. When he finally put the finished scene on the Moviola, Nick Nichols and I sat down and did just a little bit of editing on it.

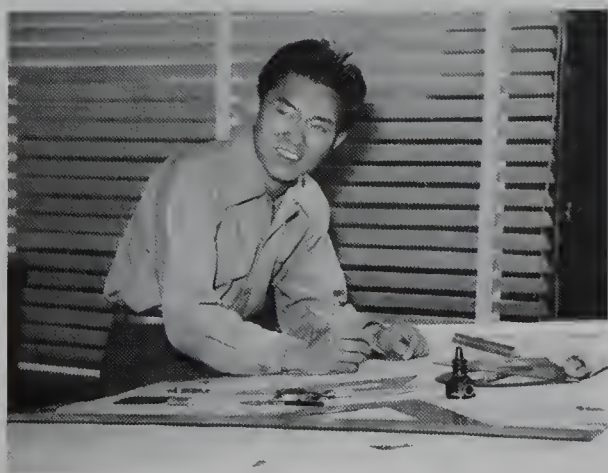
We also hit a snag with the voice of Templeton the rat, the villain of the piece. Fans of *Charlotte's Web* might have wondered what I was talking about when I mentioned that Tony Randall had been hired to play the character, when Templeton in the finished film was voiced by the comedian Paul Lynde. Well, Tony *had* been hired, and he recorded all the dialogue and the songs. At first it seemed like a perfect fit and casting Tony made total sense if you really understood Templeton's character. He could also do his own singing, which was a plus. Voice actors in animated films often have their songs dubbed by a sound-alike. But when we listened to Tony's tracks, something wasn't quite right. Somehow or other, his readings just went flat, which surprised all of us. Tony's delivery was a bit too sophisticated and his singing was too operatic. He did not have quite enough of that raunchy feeling that the character required.



Iwao at age ten with his sister, Kimiko, and baby brother, Noriko. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



A reunion of "Manzanites" in Los Angeles after the war, with Iwao second from left in front row. Photo by Toyo Miyatake. Courtesy of Toyo Miyatake Studio Collection.



Iwao's hiring by the Walt Disney Studios was announced by this photo, dated June 2, 1945, which was used to encourage Japanese American internees to leave the camps and return to everyday life. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



The Disney Studios baseball team in the mid-1950s. Iwao is front left, while Roy E. Disney, Walt's nephew, is second from right in the back row. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



Key members of the Hanna-Barbera staff pose in front of the studio, including technical supervisor Frank Paiker (left), director Nick Nichols (in white tie), director Carl Urbano (third from left, rear), Joe Barbera (center), production supervisor Jayne Barbera (on ground), and Iwao (right). "Robin Hound," seen on the presentation board, never made it past development. ™ & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



Iwao and Barbara Takamoto,
mid-1960s. Courtesy of Barbara
Takamoto.

Even though they were
not blood relations, Iwao's
son, Michael, and Barbara's
daughter, Leslie, were often
mistaken for twins. Courtesy
of Barbara Takamoto.



With son Michael in 1971.
Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

The Takamoto family, mid-1970s.
Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



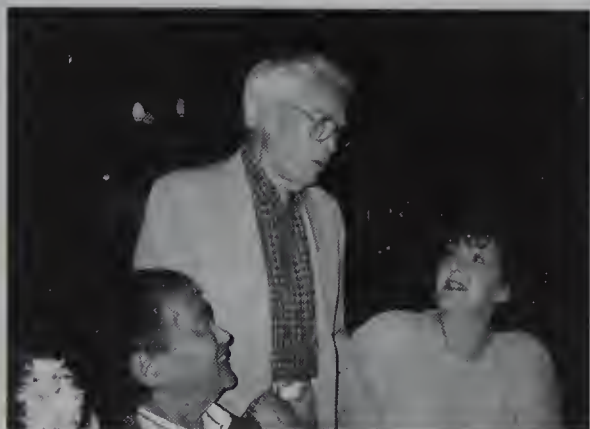
Iwao at his drawing board,
circa the late 1970s. Courtesy
of Barbara Takamoto.



Hanna-Barbera studio staffers on a business trip to Japan. Iwao is at center. Bill Hanna is third from right, kneeling, and production executive Margaret Loesch is standing on the right. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



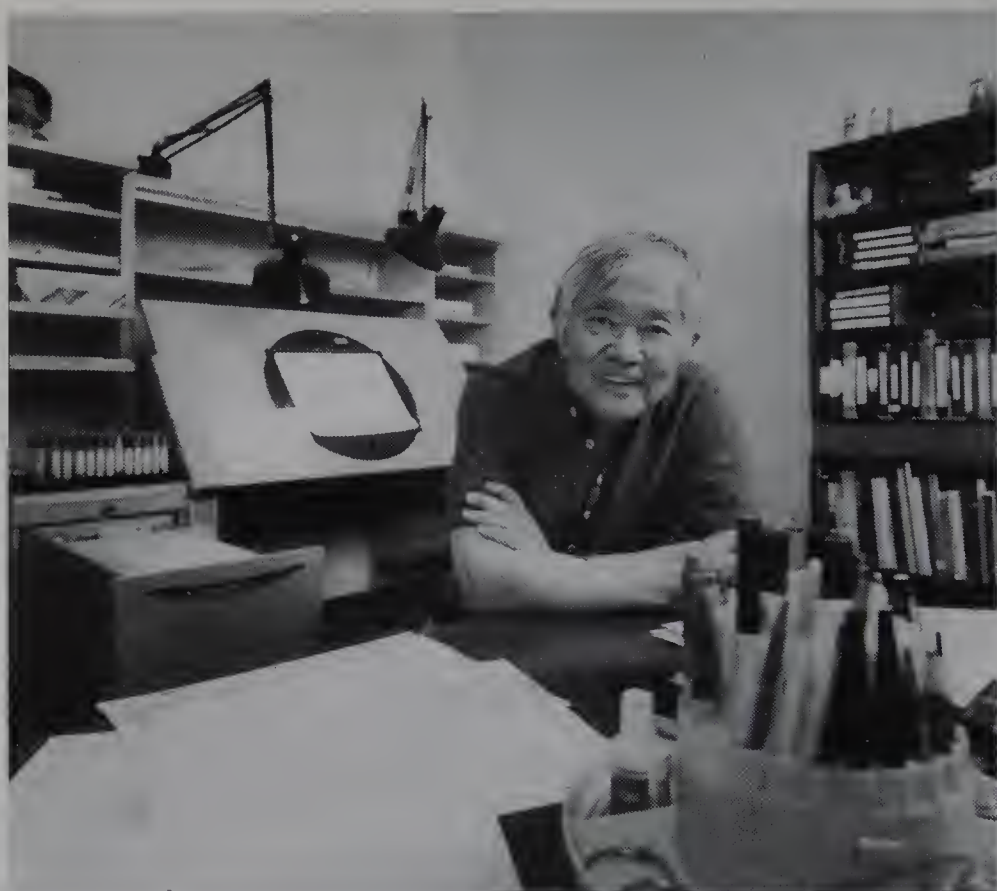
Michael Takamoto, producer Davis Doi, and Iwao at a studio party, in the early 1980s. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



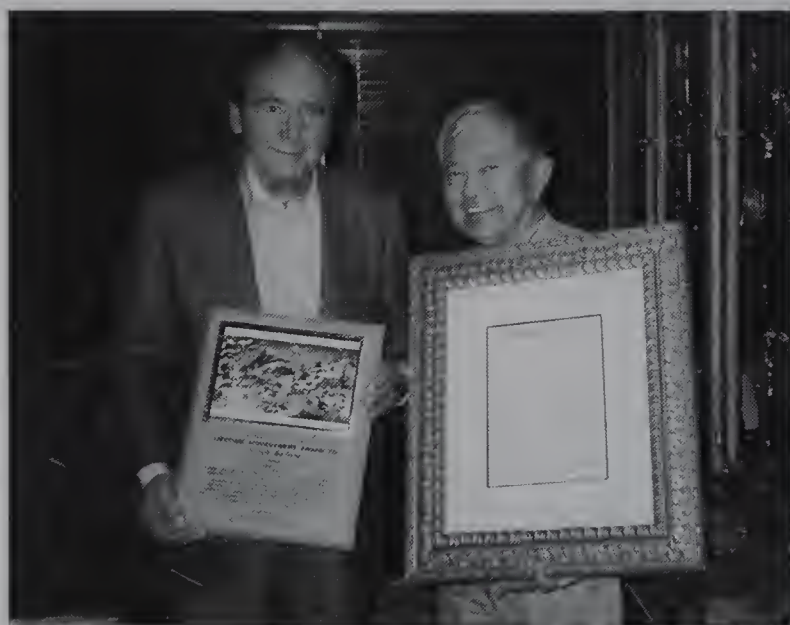
At a dinner function with Bill Hanna. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



Joe Barbera (left) poses with his key design staff: Jerry Eisenberg, Iwao, Iraj Paran, and Willie Ito. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



At work in the place where a thousand characters were born. Photo by Greg Preston, sampselpreston.com. "Scooby-Doo"™ & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved.



Helping Joe Barbera receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from an Italian American Society. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



Receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Japanese American National Museum in 2001. From left: Museum head Irene Hirano (now Mrs. Daniel Inouye), Museum Chairman Ernest Doizaki, actor Gedde Watanabe, Iwao Takamoto, television executive Scott Sassa, actress Pat Suzuki, former Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, and Senator Daniel Inouye. Photo by Norman Sugimoto, Japanese American National Museum.



With Carleton Clay, who served as personal assistant to Bill Hanna, Joe Barbera, and Iwao. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



With former network executive Fred Silverman some thirty-five years after the birth of Scooby-Doo. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

With former Warner Bros. Animation president Sander Schwartz.
Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



Conducting a lecture (and drawing, of course) in Buenos Aires in 1999.
"Scooby-Doo"™ & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved. Courtesy of
Barbara Takamoto.



Barbara and Iwao pose with a friend
while on tour in Australia. Courtesy
of Barbara Takamoto.

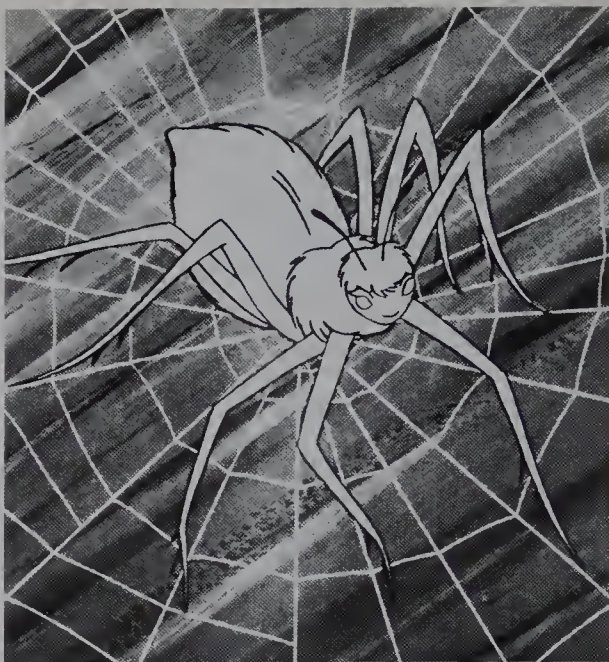


With coauthor Michael Mallory.
Courtesy of Michael Mallory.

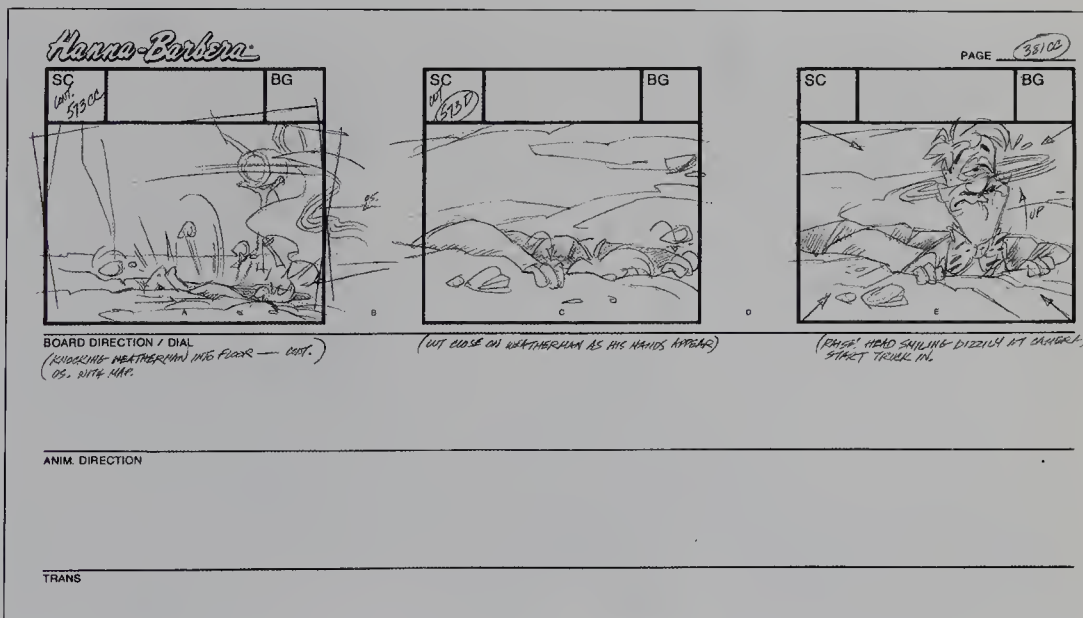
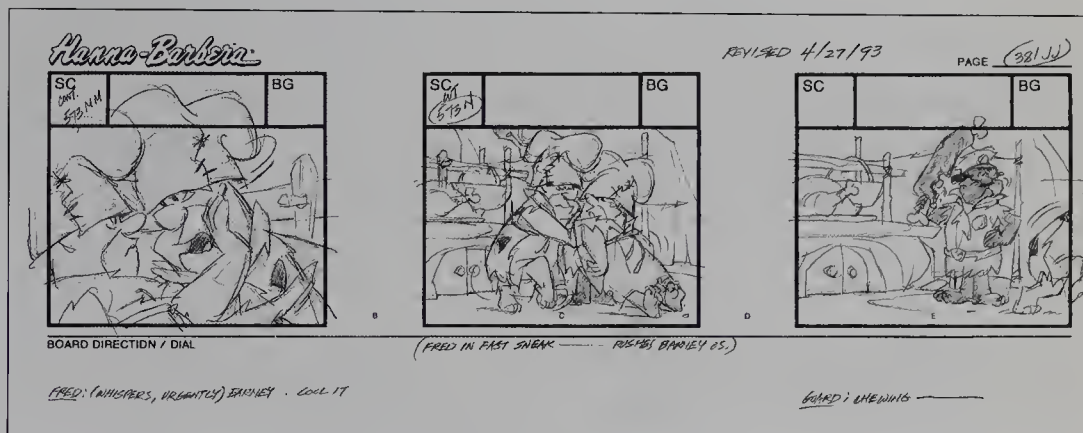
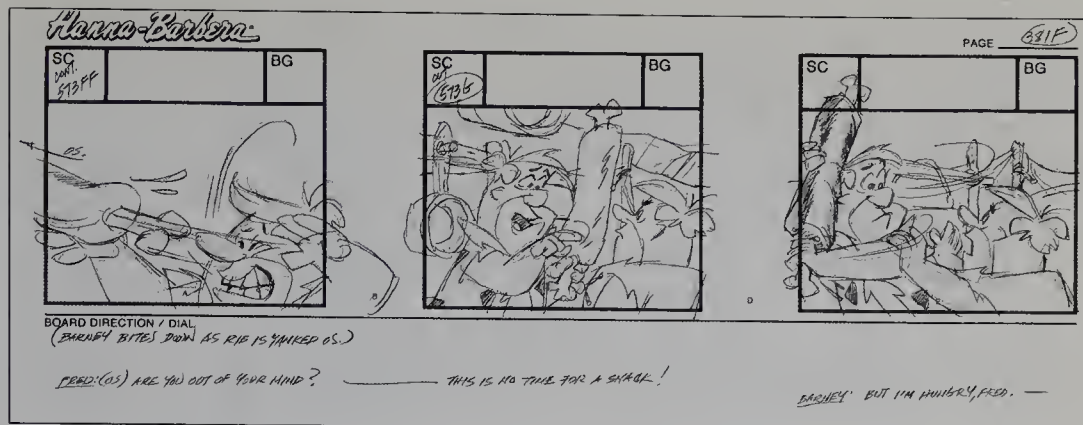


Action sketches of baseball players. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

The star of *Charlotte's Web*. It was quite a task to design an appealing spider. Courtesy of Paramount Pictures. *Charlotte's Web* © Paramount Pictures Corp. All rights reserved.



Wilbur the Pig in comfortable surroundings from the feature *Charlotte's Web*. Courtesy of Paramount Pictures. *Charlotte's Web* © Paramount Pictures Corp. All rights reserved.



These three storyboard pages by Iwao for the 1994 television film *Hollyrock-a-Bye Baby* demonstrate his genius for infusing still drawings with movement, action, and humor.™ & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved.

An unused book illustration created for Phyllis Diller's 1970 book, *The Complete Mother*. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

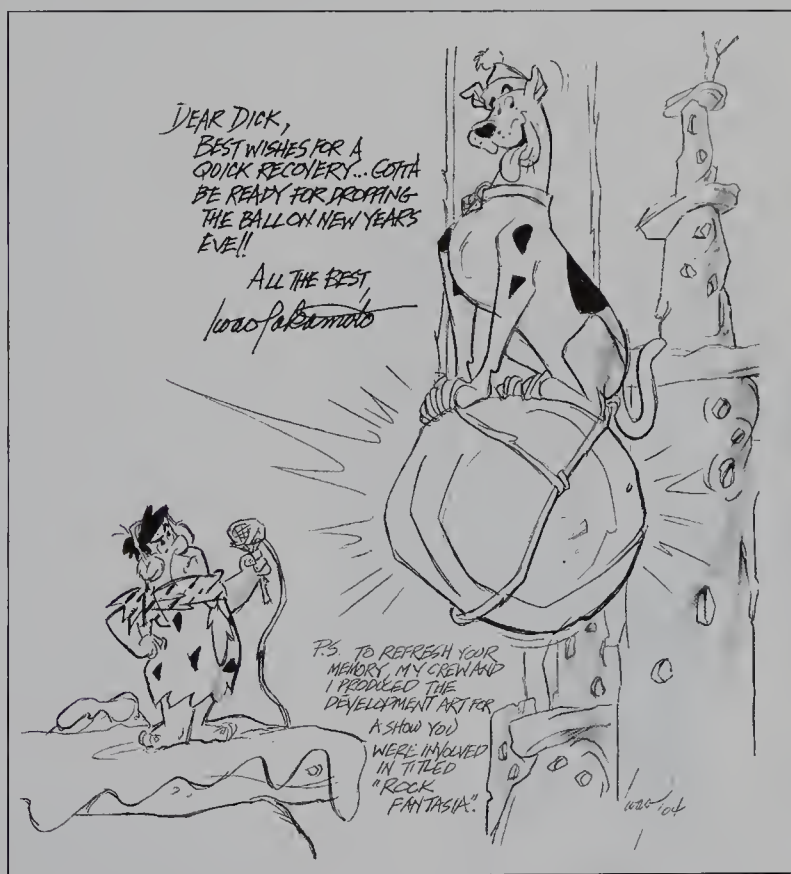


A caricatured Phyllis Diller lectures her child in an illustration created, but not actually used, for Diller's book *The Complete Mother*. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.





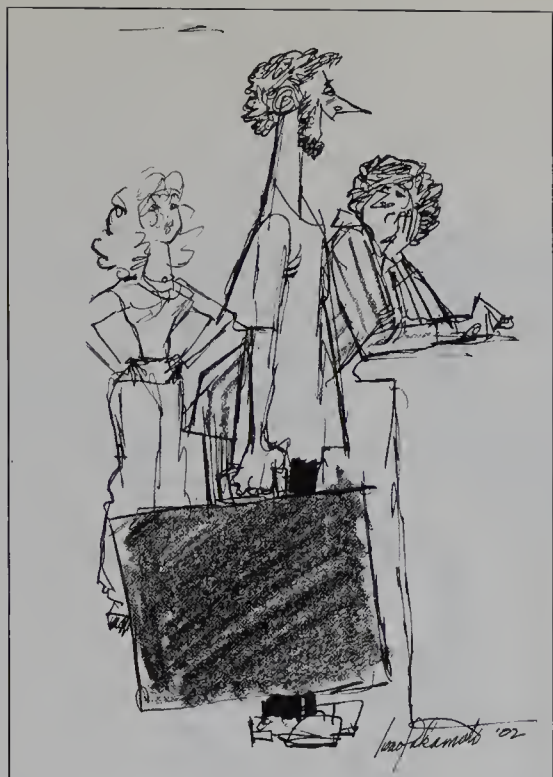
A custom-made birthday card by Iwao for writer Harvey Bullock. Characters [™] & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.



Iwao made this get-well card for TV personality Dick Clark. Characters [™] & © Hanna-Barbera. All rights reserved. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

Iwao rarely went anywhere without his sketch pad. These two sketches titled "Cell Phones" and "Trying on Clothes" are from a 2003 series titled *At the Mall*. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.





"Portfolio Review," part of a 2002 collection titled *At the Studio*. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

This 2002 self-portrait reveals with humorous clarity the problems a man of his size often faced during movie theater outings. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.





"Driving Through Beverly Hills," 2002 original sketch. Courtesy of Barbara Takamoto.

Joe decided that Tony had to be replaced. This was certainly not the first time such a decision had been made. In fact, Joe is known as something of a stickler for finding the exact right voice. The entire cast of "The Flintstones" had been replaced and the first two or three episodes re-recorded with the new actors after Joe felt dissatisfied with the original voices. In finding a replacement for Tony Randall, Joe did not have far to look.

Paul Lynde was already doing quite a bit of work at the studio. He was playing a character called "The Hooded Claw" in the show "The Perils of Penelope Pittstop" and had also done a regular role in "Where's Huddles." I would sometimes catch up with him in the hallways of Hanna-Barbera where inevitably he would start crowing about a particular Los Angeles clothier to whom he was devoted. Joe had Paul come in and take a shot at Templeton, and it worked perfectly. Paul's performance had so much more life in it, and he was able to give a sarcastic, even nasty edge to it that was missing in Tony's readings, so even though he was a fairly big name, Tony was out.

There is a post-script to this story. One time Joe was attending some sort of Hollywood function where he was to get up and speak after a long, glowing introduction. Who did they get to introduce him? Tony Randall. So Tony goes on and on about Joe's accomplishments, his Oscars, his Emmys, all his other awards, and everything else anybody could think of to say about Joe, and then finishes his introduction by adding: "And lastly, he is the only man in show business who ever fired me!"

As I have mentioned, Joe is someone who is rarely, if ever, at a loss for words. So he got up and walked to the podium, turned to Tony Randall, and said: "You know, Tony, I never fired you. I just didn't think you were a rat."

Toward the end of production, thoughts suddenly turned to how the opening title credit sequence would look. I had envisioned it as being of the type that Disney had used on its classic films—just letters overtop a textured background, so the names appear very clearly. But at some point I was informed that the credits were to be laid over pictorials from the film. Initially the powers that were wanted images from segments of the film, but I threw that idea out. It is too much like putting a trailer for the film at the beginning of the film. Instead I had another idea, and I called in Paul Julian and asked if he could paint seven or eight bucolic scenes of New England countryside to back the credits.

"Yeah, I can do that with no problem," he told me.

Then I requested: "There's one thing I'd like you to add to them. Since this is the beginning of the picture, in these paintings I would like to see the sun

rise without actually seeing the sun." Paul's eyes just lit up and grew to about three times their normal size. "Really?" he asked. Just thinking about a painting challenge such as that filled him with pure delight.

While we were finishing up production on the picture, a separate unit was running around the studio producing a film about *us*. David Nelson, the older son of Ozzie and Harriet, was at that time transitioning from being a performer into a filmmaker. One of his first assignments was to make a documentary about the making of *Charlotte's Web*. David and his crew seemed to be at the studio all the time, and we obliged him as best we could. One of the routines that he cooked up for me was to be filmed behind a drawing board, basically explaining how to turn an arachnid into a leading lady. After it was finished, some of the studio's business agents came running in to tell me how good the footage looked. "You come across so much stronger and better than Joe!" they said. If so, it was probably because Joe had virtually turned the project over to me, so I was able to speak about it convincingly.

I have to assume, though, that these agents did not run into Joe's office with the same comments.

Charlotte's Web was released in March 1973 through Paramount. Unfortunately, the studio had no idea how to market an animated feature. I think their last experience at it was *Mr. Bug Goes to Town* thirty years earlier. They did the kind of inadequate marketing campaign that Warners pulled on *The Iron Giant* several years ago, so I was surprised the film did any business at all.

Even more surprising were the reviews. It's not that I thought we had a bad picture, but we weren't Disney. At that time Disney did not really have any serious competitors in the area of animated family-oriented features. Films such as *Fritz the Cat* or *Fantastic Planet* were not vying for the Disney audience. Yet here we came trying to do something in the Disney mold.

In particular, I was expecting a scathing review like the ones that came from the *New Yorker* back during the days I was at the Disney studio. There was one particular reviewer there named McCarthy who had a long history of sharpening his knives on any animated film. We used to wait for his reviews because they were so funny—scathing, but funny. I remember for *Lady and the Tramp*, McCarthy opened up his review by saying something like: "*Lady and the Tramp* is a story about a cocker spaniel bitch in heat with eyelashes a mile long." So we were prepared for just about anything, except what we got: great reviews. I remember opening up to the movie section of *Time* magazine and over on the left-hand side was a review of a new musical adaptation of *Tom Sawyer*, which also had a song score by the Sherman Brothers, and the

reviewer was not very kind to it. Then I went across the page and found *Charlotte's Web*, and thought: "Oh, Christ, they're *really* going to do it to us!" But when I read it, it was a very good review. They thought it was terrific. What seemed to impress them was the fact that you could do something with a spider in the first place.

While *Charlotte's Web* did not exactly burn up the box office, Paramount made quite a bit of money after its initial release by putting it on television, where it became something of a perennial at Christmas time. Today it is being marketed as a classic on VHS and DVD (though the presence now of a live-action-and-digital remake might have an affect on that status). A few years ago I called up Paramount to try and get copies of the film on video. I spoke to a woman who told me that they would be willing to supply tapes for me, and then she asked: "And what did you do on the film?"

I said, "I directed it."

"Oh."

But they were as good as their word and sent me several copies of *Charlotte's Web*—along with a bill for them.

HANNA-BARBERA BRANCHES OUT

Nineteen seventy-three, the year *Charlotte's Web* was released, was one of our busiest seasons ever. Hanna-Barbera had nine series split between the three networks, though without question, the breakout series was one called "Super Friends." Basically the show was a campy spin on DC Comics' "Justice League of America," which combined Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, and Aquaman. We added three new characters: "Marvin," "Wendy," and "Wonder Dog."

Viewers loved this show. It was one of the top-rated programs on Saturday morning. And the writers and the story editors at Hanna-Barbera loved doing the show. They got a huge kick out of it, since so many of them fondly remembered the live-action "Batman" TV series, with its over-the-top "Biff-Bam-Pow" fight scenes and refusal to take seriously a bunch of adults running around in public wearing tights, capes, and clown costumes. And that was the way the writing staff wrote "Super Friends," with all that underlying humor and sense of the ridiculous.

The only people who did not like the show were the editors of DC Comics, who actually *did* take this stuff seriously. To say "disliked" is actually an understatement: they wanted our heads. I never got so many irate letters about anything as those that came from the comic-book staff regarding how we were handling the characters. There was a high degree of sarcasm to them, an underlying viciousness that sometimes got to the point of being x-rated. These people did not simply promote the comic-book world, they *lived* in it. Periodically I would gather these vindictive missives up and take them into the show writers and show them to them. The reply I usually got from them was no less blunt than the letters: "Ah, tell them to go fuck themselves!" they'd say. Today, of course, they could tell them personally, since we are now a sister company of DC within the Warner Bros. corporate structure.

Our other shows that year were beginning to reflect the trend of trying to capitalize on hot properties from elsewhere in the industry. Series like “Jeannie,” which was an animated version of “I Dream of Jeannie,” and “The Addams Family” were clearly derived from their live-action counterparts, while “Butch Cassidy and the Sun Dance Kids” at least *sounded* like it came from the Paul Newman/Robert Redford movie, but it was really a whole different idea involving a pack of teenagers who are really government spies while traveling under the cover of a rock band. We were doing a lot of teenager shows—“Speed Buggy,” “Goober and the Ghost Chasers”—in the wake of the success of “Scooby-Doo” and “Josie and the Pussycats.” I would still get my hands on a show whenever I felt it was necessary, but there were other people, like Bob Singer, who were very capable in terms of heading production and maintaining quality control throughout a series, that I could hand things off to.

One project I hung onto was “Cyrano,” which aired on ABC in 1974 as one of their “After-School Specials,” and which once again belied the charge that there existed a “Hanna-Barbera look.” In that case, the design style was inspired by the pen-and-ink work of Ronald Searle, whom I had met while back at Disney’s.

I assigned an artist named Phil Mendez to design the characters in adherence to Searle’s style, though I ended up handling a few of them myself, particularly “Roxanne,” which I took on when Phil complained that he could not draw women. In laying the show out, I ended up restaging about three-quarters of the storyboards that had been done by our usual television crew, who simply were not used to this kind of drawing, or even the more sophisticated style that the story required. Similarly, the animators had a hard time staying up with it, both in the amount of production time they were given and also in their abilities to handle something that was far more stylistic than a Saturday morning show like “Goober and the Ghost Chasers.”

The voice cast was a bit out of the ordinary for us as well. Jose Ferrer, who had won an Oscar for the 1950 film version of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, came in to voice the character in the special. That casting coup was something of an inside job, though. Ferrer was then starring in a revival of the play at the Huntington Hartford Theater in Hollywood, and it so happened that the president of the Huntington Hartford was a patron of the arts named Joe Barbera. Joe persuaded Ferrer to do the special, and Ferrer complied by bringing over several members of the stage company to voice their characters for us as well. Joe recalled that once he got Jose in the recording booth, Jose said: “Now, how do you want me to play this?” Joe responded, “However you want to, you

do whatever you think is right.” Given Ferrer’s history with the role, I guess Joe figured direction was superfluous.

“Cyrano” was a stretch on all levels, but we had an ally at the network in the form of a young executive named Brandon Stoddard. He loved the way the show was being done, and at one point he asked, “Is there any way that I can help?”

“Yes,” I replied, “you could run interference for me with the broadcast standards people to make sure that they allow us to have blood flowing during the battle, because to not have it would be silly.”

“I totally agree,” Brandon said. “You’ve got blood.”

But around that time, a lot of our people were leaving the studio to go elsewhere, and not just to another animation studio across town, but on the other side of the world. Takashi, whom I had pulled in on *Charlotte’s Web*, and Steve Nakagawa, whom I knew from my Disney days, had gotten money from Sanrio, a toy company based in Japan, to start up a feature production company and produce an animated version of Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*. Ray Patterson worked on the film and even Jerry Eisenberg left Hanna-Barbera to go over to Japan and serve as one of the film’s sequence directors. For some reason, by the time actual production began, Steve Nakagawa was no longer part of the project.

Metamorphosis had a more adult edge to it than the kinds of things we were working on. Actually, almost all animation and comic books in Japan have that adult edge, and the comic books in particular are simply a part of the culture. Restaurants in Japan have magazine racks filled with this *manga* and patrons go in, select a magazine or book, and then take it over to the table. Reading while you’re eating is a big pastime in Japan.

Joe Ruby and Ken Spears would also leave Hanna-Barbera to start up their own studio. Ruby-Spears was not so much new competition for us as a close relation, since they were also owned by Taft. Another H-B employee, Andy Heyward, who worked for us as a writer, would soon leave to start up a new company called DIC.

New cartoon studios were popping up everywhere. I had even been sounded out about starting my own studio a couple times, though very, very informally. One time Lou Scheimer, who ran Filmation, told me that my name had come up in conversation about who should take over the old Terrytoons studio in New York. CBS then had a controlling interest in Terrytoons, and Fred Silverman had become such a powerhouse in terms of influence at CBS, especially in the animated product area, my name was bandied around, according to Lou. Nothing ever came of it, though, and Lou himself went on to pro-

duce a new Saturday morning series with the Terrytoons characters “Mighty Mouse” and “Heckle and Jeckle” in the late seventies.

Another carrot was dangled in front of me by Bud Getzler, who had left Hanna-Barbera and moved on to become an executive at Viacom. Back then, Viacom had been an adjunct of CBS. Now it’s an entertainment industry giant. But during his transition period between the two companies, Bud asked me if I had ever considered having a studio of my own. I said, “Not really,” and Bud said he just wanted to gauge what my feelings on the subject were, because I had done so much work with Bill Hanna. In Bud’s eyes, Bill was the guy who really held the Hanna-Barbera studio structure together.

To make conversation, I said: “Yeah, I’ve learned enough from Bill so that I could probably do what he does.” Bud’s eyes lit up, and I realized he was thinking of the possibility of giving me a studio under Viacom. But nothing ever came of that, either. I don’t think he ever got Viacom to a stage where they were truly interested in footing the bill for starting a studio for animation.

Still another time I was involved in talks Ruby and Spears were having with David DePatie, co-owner of DePatie-Freleng, who was interested in getting Ruby-Spears to develop shows for them. This was predicated both on their proven ability to develop shows as well as their network contacts. At one point they asked me if I would go along with them to meet with DePatie, who was then in the final round of talks with them. I think somewhere in the backs of their minds was the thought that if they could package me into this deal, it might sweeten it.

We went to David’s office and all sat around and kibitzed for a while, and finally David said, “Well, we’ll pretty much try to put this altogether based on this meeting.” He was directing his comments directly to Ken and Joe at this point. He looked at them and said, “I’d really like to sit down and seriously finalize a deal with the two of you.” Then he looked over at me and said, “You I wouldn’t touch . . . I don’t want Joe Barbera putting a hit on me.”

Whether or not David had received some kind of warning from Hanna-Barbera not to scout me, I can’t say, though I didn’t seriously think David’s life was in danger. And as much as Joe loved to make sure that everyone knew about his Sicilian heritage, and as much as he enjoyed playing the role of the “godfather” of animation in private, he had always been uncomfortable with that Italian stereotype. But the experience clued me in to the fact that the whole idea of another company or studio seriously wooing me away from Hanna-Barbera probably wasn’t going to happen. I stayed where I was, but Ruby and Spears did go on to produce such shows as “The Barkleys” for DePatie-Freleng.

(If there had been anyone Joe really wanted to see whacked, it would have been a much younger cartoon maker who many years later used classic H-B characters for a new short. The results did not please Joe. When he saw the cartoon in question, all he said was: "I want him dead.")

If some artists were streaming out of H-B to work on different projects, others were coming in, including my son Michael, who spent quite a number of years working in the animation industry as a designer, first for Ralph Bakshi and then later with Hanna-Barbera. While he was with us I was always kept apprised of his activities, whether I wanted to be or not. Also joining us at the studio were two of the real biggies: Tex Avery and Friz Freleng. Tex's stint at Hanna-Barbera occurred a few years earlier than Friz's, and it was not so much a case of his being in between jobs as it was of Bill Hanna reaching out to take care of an old friend. Tex had been an influential Warner Bros. director—in fact he is usually credited with having more to do than anybody else with developing the character of Bugs Bunny. Right before the war he moved over to MGM, where his unit and Bill and Joe's unit operated as friendly rivals throughout the 1940s and early fifties. Through the 1960s Tex had primarily been doing animated commercials, but Bill brought him in to develop a character called "Kwicky Koala." Bill was a very loyal man. Behind the scenes, Tex had been something of a mentor to him at MGM and the two had become good friends. I saw quite a bit of Tex at H-B. He was frequently in my office because he got along very well with my secretary, Dolores, and would often come down to chat.

Tex worked as long as he was able to but eventually became too ill to keep coming in. He died from cancer in 1980, a year before "The Kwicky Koala Show" went on the air.

"Kwicky Koala" came and went, but another that premiered in 1981 became a surprise phenomenon: "The Smurfs." I don't think any of us thought that this adaptation of a Belgian comic strip about little blue woodland creatures would be so popular and last for so long—eight seasons. I can't really lay a great deal of claim for any of that, or the show's two Emmy awards, since this was one of those projects with which I was heavily involved during development, and then turned it over to other hands and moved on.

I think some of those other hands are still stained blue.

Friz Freleng was best known for his Warner Bros. cartoons, and then later for things like "The Pink Panther" and "The Ant and the Aardvark" for his own company, DePatie-Freleng. He landed at Hanna-Barbera in the early 1980s for a show called "Pink Panther and Sons," which is pretty self-explanatory. In his

prime, Friz had a reputation for throwing tantrums. It has been claimed that he and his temper were the real inspirations behind “Yosemite Sam.” But by the time I worked with him, Friz had sweetened up considerably and was very easy to work with.

At the time, Margaret Loesch, who went on to start the Fox Kids network, was a production executive at the studio. She used to put together these creative think-tanks for some of the studio staff up at Ojai, usually at a golf resort. I imagine the idea was to have a pleasant retreat and get the creative juices flowing. A lot of juice did indeed flow at these events, but it usually flowed out of a bottle and into a glass. We would get up to the resort late Friday, knowing that Saturday morning was reserved for a meeting. After that, Jean MacCurdy and Friz couldn’t wait to get out onto the golf course. And after a day of golf, the partying would start.

Bob Ogle and a writer named Dave Detiege would be along at these events, and even within an industry known for its thirst, these two were superstars. At the height of the evening parties, it would not be an unusual sight to see Bob and Friz on the dance floor of the lounge, dancing like maniacs. And at this point, Friz was already in his seventies!

Yet another giant who came our way was Vladimir “Bill” Tytla, a former Disney animator who might not be as well known to the general public as the Nine Old Men, but who was regarded as a legend within the industry. He had worked on the character “Stromboli” in *Pinocchio* and also “Tchernabog,” the devil creature from the “Night on Bald Mountain” section of *Fantasia*. By the time I had gotten to Disney’s in 1945 Bill was already gone, but he remained a legend there for bringing to life these big, bold, strong characters (though I have always felt a lot of Tchernabog’s power came from Bill’s having given it a touch of femininity). I would not meet him until a good two decades later, when he was arriving at the end of his career.

Both Bill and Joe knew Tytla, and when Bill Hanna discovered that he was in Los Angeles from New York, he hired him to do a commercial that involved the rather complex animation of human figures. One day Hanna came in and asked if I could lay this commercial out, which I did, not thinking much about it since it was just a one-shot project. Then some time later a short, older man with a big handlebar mustache appeared in the hallway and marched right through my secretary’s room and stood in the doorway to my office. “Are you Iwao?” he said, and I acknowledged that I was. “I’m Bill Tytla,” he declared.

I thought, *Oh my god, I’m finally meeting the legend!*

We exchanged the usual formalities, and then he said: “I just came in to

tell you that those are the best goddamned layouts I ever worked on!" Then he turned around and walked back out. That was the only time I ever met him, though I have to confess that the experience of being praised like that by an acknowledged legend left me glowing for a few minutes.

THE BUSIEST PLACE ON EARTH

Throughout the 1970s, things were coming in and going out of Hanna-Barbera so rapidly that it was sometimes hard to keep track of them, and on too many occasions, we would be asked to execute the near impossible.

One such assignment involved “The Harlem Globetrotters.” Someone at the studio decided they wanted a series of pictures of the team to run under the closing credits—and they wanted them finished over the weekend! I took the assignment home on Friday and vowed that I would hand it in first thing Monday, and if somebody didn’t like it, to hell with them!

At home I took out a set of Magic Markers and from memory began slashing out some traditional poses of basketball players dribbling, jumping, shooting, and the like, all rendered in abstract blocks of color. Once I had finished those I penned in the details over the color, and the results came out looking fine. I took them in on Monday and tossed them down on Nick Nichols’s desk. “God, those look great,” he said. “How’d you get them done so fast?”

For all of this period’s activity, the surprising, even ironic truth was that Taft Broadcasting began to lose interest in our work. Taft had formed a division call TECO (for Taft Entertainment Company) and put a man named Sy Fischer in charge of it. Sy was an agent with the Ashley-Famous Agency in New York and became the business agent for Hanna-Barbera. He was a well-connected guy and a good friend of Fred Silverman’s. In fact, Sy once told me he had an inside track with Fred for one reason: they both liked to eat. Of course, everybody likes to eat, but Fred and Sy practically made a sideline out of it, frequently going out to dinner together and developing a close working relationship.

Sy called me one day and said, “I just want to let you know what’s happening: it’s sort of an end of an era at Taft Broadcasting, and it means trouble as far as the animation business is concerned, they’re pretty much getting rid

of it.” It seemed Taft was more interested in live action (though in another irony, one of Sy’s accomplishments as head of TECO was the setting up of Joe Ruby and Ken Spears with their own company, Ruby-Spears Productions, which did nothing but animation).

This new emphasis on live action coincided with Joe Barbera’s interests. Far more so than Bill Hanna, Joe had had ambitions to branch out into live action, going back to the days of *Anchors Aweigh* in the mid-1940s. Joe said that the film’s director, George Sidney, who would become a silent partner in Hanna-Barbera in the early television days, had actually allowed him to direct on the set for a day. By Joe’s own admission, the day’s filming had not gone all that well, but after that he was always happy to become involved in some live-action projects.

In 1972 he and Bill had produced a live-action western television film called *Hardcase*, which starred Clint Walker. Another one, a comedy western titled *Shootout in a One Dog Town*, starring Richard Crenna, aired in 1974. Dick Crenna had been given an office at Hanna-Barbera—I believe he was involved in developing some of these projects—that was located right above mine, and he used to come down and chat from time to time. Dick was a fun, very intelligent guy, and he would tell me stories about the various films he had been in, including one in which he played a surgeon. He said he had to learn the entire ritual of performing major surgery from actual doctors who would coach him. In the film he would be using real instruments, including a real scalpel, but would be cutting into a piece of beef instead of another actor. At the end of this particular scene, one of the experts who had taught him the procedure said: “Now, if you could actually do it all over again and remember just what you’re supposed to do, you could actually perform that procedure.” I don’t believe he ever tried, though.

Probably the studio’s most notable live-action effort was *The Gathering*, a television drama that Joe produced with Louis “Deke” Heyward. Joe had brought in Deke to develop more live-action films. Deke was a veteran television and film producer who had worked with Dick Clark and Sam Arkoff at American International Pictures, and his son Andy would later come to work for us. Deke opened a lot of doors for Joe, and I got to tag along on some of these ventures, too, to Hollywood power spots like the “Black Tower” at Universal, where we met with studio head Ned Tannen, and the old, ornate executive offices at MGM, which were left over largely unchanged from the Thalberg and Mayer era.

The Gathering received an Emmy Award for Outstanding Special of the Year, but Deke came out of it feeling like he had not received the credit he

was due. It was Joe and another producer, Harry Sherman, who accepted the award, and while Harry made sure to acknowledge Deke in his acceptance speech, Joe had not even mentioned him (perhaps after the Nick "Nicholas" incident he was afraid of mispronouncing his name). Deke left the studio, but the live-action projects continued. I enjoyed this period because it allowed me the chance to get involved in new areas, such as working on some glass matte background shots.

There were two very unusual television projects that we produced at this time as well. One was "The Hanna-Barbera Happy Hour," a prime-time musical variety show that aired on NBC, which had the distinction of being hosted by two life-sized puppets named "Honey" and "Sis." They were a duo along the lines of "Laverne and Shirley," which was then popular on TV. The show was produced by a couple of top-line musical producers named Ken and Mitzi Welch, who had enough clout in the business to get good guest stars and also to attract fashion designer Bob Mackie to create the costumes for these puppets. My participation was designing the two characters themselves, one of which was a blonde and the other a redhead. There is a television encyclopedia out there that lists me as "puppeteer" for the show, but that is inaccurate. Honey and Sis were really operated by a team of six movement experts dressed entirely in blue tights, who stood behind the puppets in front of a blue screen, which rendered them invisible on camera. They would be lying around on the floor, writhing and performing some incredible gymnastic moves in order to make these two puppets do what was called for. God knows what contortions they had to get into to achieve whatever they were after, but it was all very impressive. Unfortunately, the show lasted only four weeks in 1978.

The other unique project never even made it to air. It was a pilot called "The Funny World of Fred and Bunni," and was produced right around the same time as "The Hanna-Barbera Happy Hour." The "Fred" in question was not Flintstone, but Fred Travalena, the singer, comedian, and impressionist. It was "Bunni" who fell more to my area of responsibility: she was an animated character, a sexy young woman, who in the context of the show was supposed to be Fred's conscience. Her role was somewhat like that of Keely Smith, who used to zing her partner Louis Prima back when they were a team. I developed Bunni, and a young actress named Kathie Johnson came in to provide her voice. Years later she made a little bit bigger splash under the name Kathie Lee Gifford. "The Funny World of Fred and Bunni" was another example of the kind of unique things that Hanna-Barbera was experimenting with at this time, but it did not sell to a network. It was projects such as this, however,

that kept me within the confines of Hanna-Barbera, because I was constantly getting the chance to do things I hadn't done before.

Joe, around this time, stepped outside of the confines of the studio to produce a live-action feature film called *Mother, Jugs & Speed*, with Bill Cosby and Raquel Welch, just to prove to Hollywood (and TECO in particular) that he could do it. Joe put the whole film together and it was pretty successful, but it did not lead to more feature films for him. In fact, Joe at one point had an agreement for a seven-picture deal with Sam Arkoff, but the corporate structure was such that he had to get Taft's approval for it, and they refused. This is perhaps the final irony, given that Taft was the outfit that had wanted to concentrate on live action in the first place.

Hanna-Barbera's live-action phase began right around the time of *Charlotte's Web*, so maybe it was fitting that its end coincided with another animated feature film, *Heidi's Song*. Joe had been interested in doing something with the Heidi story for a long time, and he brought in a writer named Jameson Brewer to work on the screenplay. The script went to the storyboard phase, but Joe was unhappy with the way it was being handled.

Can anyone say *déjà vu* all over again?

This time instead of coming down to my office, we were both on an airplane heading for New York, for one of those show selling trips that I tried my best not to be included in (obviously this time it did not work). On the way there Joe started complaining about how the story crew just did not seem to have a grip on what he wanted for the film, but it was on the way back to L.A. that he turned to me and said: "You know, if you have any thoughts on it, why don't you take it over?"

I said, "Okay, if that's what you want." Unfortunately, it was not to be quite as easy this time around.

Pre-production on the film was at a pretty advanced state, and Nick Nichols was already on the picture. In fact, he was already starting to write out timing sheets based on the storyboards that Bill's team had done for the film—the very boards that Joe didn't like. So when I got into the act I went back to the beginning and started to change things with a whole new team of story artists. This proved to be too much for Nick. Having spent two decades at Hanna-Barbera, he now declared that this "takeover" was an affront to him and he promptly left the studio, moving over to Ruby-Spears. I was now stuck without an animation director. (Fortunately I was able to remain friends with Nick on a personal basis.)

I began to look around for a replacement, as well as for someone who could

production design the film. I wanted stylists who might contribute meaningfully to some of the character work. I contacted Carl Urbano, who would go on to become a regular director for our television shows, but he turned it down, commenting: "That's too big a job for me." I also contacted Hawley Pratt, who had done a great deal of work with Friz Freleng, both at Warner Bros. and at DePatie-Freleng, but Hawley said that he was getting into serigraphy and did not have the time or inclination to take on *Heidi's Song*. Finally I went to Paul Julian, who had contributed so much to *Charlotte's Web*. Paul agreed to take on the design duties, and he was a good choice. But we were still without a director.

Virtually out of the blue came an animator and director named Robert Taylor, who had done a lot of work with Ralph Bakshi on films such as *Heavy Traffic*, and who had directed the sequel to Bakshi's *Fritz the Cat* called *The Nine Lives of Fritz the Cat*. His track record seemed quite impressive, particularly since his experience leaned heavily toward feature animation. He took one of the songs that had already been composed for the film by Sammy Cahn and Burton Lane, on which we had a scratch-track (a preliminary recording used for timing purposes), and cooked up a storyboard for it, then animated and shot it. When he brought the film in, I took a look at it and said: "I think I found the director . . . you're hired."

When Joe found out what I had done he came running down and said, "Are you sure you picked somebody who knows what they're doing?" It was Joe's tendency not to directly say, "No, don't do that!" Instead he would ask if it was a good idea. I felt it was, and he deferred to my judgment, but I could tell that he was still pretty uncertain about it. But as it turned out, he became very impressed with Bob Taylor's ability and Bob ended up working directly with him to a large degree.

The one thing that Bob did on that film that I still disagree with was taking a screenwriting credit for himself, along with Joe and Jameson Brewer. He justified it by saying that he had produced some of the storytelling in the storyboard process. I've talked to a lot of storyboard artists who consider graphically embellishing a script to be an actual "rewrite," but I have a hard time calling that "writing."

With all of this activity going on at the studio, you just never knew who was going to show up at the Hanna-Barbera building in Hollywood. Whereas once all of our voice tracks had been recorded by a small group of specialists who between them took on nearly every role—people like Don Messick, Daws Butler, Janet Waldo, Jean van der Pyl, and Mel Blanc—it was

becoming a normal event to walk through the halls and see someone like Carol Channing or Jonathan Winters or Phyllis Diller, there to record a voice for a show.

Before long, doing a guest voice in a cartoon became the “in thing” to do in Hollywood. Some years later I went into the office of Gordon Hunt, the man who was casting and directing our voice tracks, and saw a picture of the actress Helen Hunt, who was then a big television star, and who would go on to win an Oscar as Best Actress. I assumed he was considering her for a part in something. Pointing at the picture, I commented: “You know, she is becoming quite an actress, and she seems to be a very nice person, too.” Gordon agreed . . . and then told me that Helen Hunt was his daughter. Prior to that, I had no idea. But I’m glad I said nice things about her!

Not all of the studio’s notable guests were actors. One time a designer named Ed Schlossberg, who was involved with the Boston Children’s Museum, came down to the studio. Taft Broadcasting, which was still our corporate parent, was thinking of expanding some of their projects to a children’s museum, creating some kind of hands-on attraction for kids that used Taft’s properties. Ed had come out from Boston with his girlfriend, a very pleasant young woman whose name I did not quite catch. While touring the studio they came across some toys that had been sent to us by Tonka Toys, with whom the studio was talking about a project called “GoBots.” These little toys were common objects, like, say, a cigarette lighter, but they could be opened up to form things that looked like robots. Ed was fascinated by these things.

When he was called back into the business meeting, I was left with his girlfriend. I asked her if there was anything she might be interested in seeing while her boyfriend was tied up, and she said that she would like to see some Smurf footage. I took her down to editorial and we watched some blue movies, so to speak, after which we went back up to my office. I went into the office of my secretary Dolores and introduced Ed’s girlfriend, and then escorted the young woman down to where Ed was having the meeting.

When I got back, Dolores was absolutely beside herself. “What is wrong?” I asked.

“Do you have any idea who that *was*?” she asked.

Outside of the fact that she was a very nice girl and she liked the Smurfs, I didn’t, as I admitted.

“That was Caroline Kennedy!” Dolores informed me. She was the daughter of the late president. Today, of course, she is Caroline Kennedy-Schlossberg.

I never was the best at recognizing people.

As for “GoBots,” the project that had figured into the encounter, while it

was never as popular as “The Smurfs,” it did manage to transform into both a television show called “Challenge of the GoBots” and then a feature film. It was a different kind of project than we were used to doing, and we were frankly a pace or two behind Marvel, which was then doing “Transformers.” But my understanding was that the head of Tonka was a fan of Tom and Jerry, and that led him to Bill and Joe.

The decade of the 1980s, during which “GoBots” emerged, might have been the studio’s most diverse period, in terms of the styles of shows and the characters. We were doing toy-inspired shows, like “Pound Puppies,” which was another Tonka project; we had deals to do other studios’ characters, like MGM’s “Droopy” and Paramount’s “Popeye”; we were doing animated spin-offs of real performers, like “The Gary Coleman Show”; and we were still exploiting some of our own traditional characters, like the Flintstones, Yogi Bear and, of course, Scooby-Doo. For me it was fun to be working with a whole slew of different designers and developing so many different things at the same time, always searching for something different.

Soon things shifted again, and Taft was suddenly folded into an outfit called Great American Broadcasting, which was headquartered in Cincinnati, like Taft had been, and run by a man named Charles Lindner. He kept Bill and Joe, but all the rest of the people from TECO were let go. Hanna-Barbera was exclusively back in the animation business and if Joe was disappointed at having to abandon his live-action dreams, at least he was finally able to realize a project that he had wanted to do for a decade or more called “The Greatest Adventure: Stories from the Bible.” This was not to be for television but rather for the then-young home video business. In putting the video series together he got help from a very energetic guy named Bruce Johnson, who served as a producer for them and did a lot of legwork. Bruce managed to get Pat Robertson’s “700 Club” interested in the series, and they bought up a lot of the videos. “The Greatest Adventure” was one of those projects where everybody told Joe that he was nuts for trying to do animated Bible tales, that there was absolutely no market for it. But it went over very well. Not long after Robertson got involved, his organization was crowing about the millionth copy being sold.

Joe had a long history of confounding the nay-sayers, who at various times had declared that animation could not be done cheaply enough to make it viable on television, that it was impossible to turn out a prime-time animated sitcom, and, going back to 1939, that there was no future for a cat-and-mouse cartoon team.

There was another pet project that Joe was interested in, outside of his

usual duties of perpetually developing, pitching, and selling bread-and-butter shows. He spent a lot of money and time developing a project whose title kept changing. It eventually evolved into something called "Back To Square One," and Joe was constantly pulling that out of his hat and showing it to anyone and everyone. The backstory of it was that a computer glitch had somehow managed to eradicate civilization so that the earth just lay barren (it was a twist on one of those atomic-bomb-wiping-out-the-planet stories). The point of the show was that civilization now has to start all over again from scratch. There were elements similar to "The Flintstones," except that in that show, society has already advanced to quite a high level, in an anachronistic way. Joe added a super-sophisticated ape as the next-door neighbor to the hero. It was a funny idea and it seems like I was always working on one version or other of it, but it was never sold.

But these kinds of pet projects, whether realized or unrealized, would become increasingly endangered at the studio as time went on.

A STUDIO IN FLUX AND A NEW ROLE AS "AMBASSADOR"

In one sense, the Great American Broadcasting takeover of Hanna-Barbera in 1987 signaled the end of the studio as we had come to know it. It certainly came with a price tag: Joe and Bill would only be the heads of the company on paper, and they would increasingly be forced to take their marching orders from others. For Bill, whose responsibilities were chiefly in the production area, this was not a major change. But for Joe, who had always been the key idea man, it was.

The first new leader to come in was David Kirschner, a very nice young man whose animation resume included co-writing the story for the successful feature *An American Tail*, the first serious challenge to Disney's dominance in the field of animated features. I was to learn that Kirschner's priorities were set at simply selling a lot of shows and getting them on the air in order to make the eventual selling of Hanna-Barbera much more of an attractive and viable thing. Today it would be called growing a company for turn-around. What I have never been certain of is whether *David* knew that this was part of the plan, or whether he thought he was simply there to revitalize the company, which after so many years of high activity had fallen into a semidormant state.

But despite his understanding of the end result, David was highly successful in kicking the company back alive. Shortly after David had come in I was having lunch with my agent, Howard West, and he spoke glowingly of what was happening at the studio, saying: "Boy, he's sure doing what he got hired for!"

Within his first year David had gotten more production going through the studio pipeline and put more shows on the air than Hanna-Barbera had done in the last five or six years combined. These included the prime-time

animated shows "Capitol Critters" and "Fish Police"—which were terrible short-lived shows, but David got them on the air—and a good half dozen more series that sprang up on Saturday morning. A couple of these Joe took a renewed personal interest in: "Tom and Jerry Kids," which he produced himself and which lasted for quite a few years, and "Droopy, Master Detective," one on which he worked closely with Jerry Eisenberg and Don Jurwich, who had also become a key player in the organization at that time.

I was enjoying this period because whenever David got himself into a tight bind on something, he would invariably come down and ask if I would help him out. One such case was a television film titled *The Dreamer of Oz*, a biography of L. Frank Baum, author of "The Wizard of Oz" and all its sequels, starring John Ritter. This was something of a personal project for David, who was a huge fan of Baum's writings and even collected original editions of the books. He asked if I would help to oversee the design of "Oz," which was a miniature set over which a "helicopter" establishing shot would fly. I remember that upon first seeing this thing set up in what looked like an oversized garage, I thought it looked jury-rigged and unconvincing, though the overhead computerized camera I found to be fascinating. But the scene ended up being very effective. In fact, it was one of the high points of the film.

Another television project called "The Last Halloween," which ran on CBS in 1991, was one of the very first, if not the first, television specials to blend live action with digital animation. The computer imagery was provided by a new company that had started up in the Bay area called Pacific Data Images, or PDI. Today PDI is the digital animation partner of DreamWorks Animation and the studio responsible for *Shrek*. Bill Hanna and I would make weekly trips to the Raleigh Studios in Hollywood to look over the footage, which had been sent down the coast from PDI.

The live-action scenes for the film were shot at the small studio on Radford Street in the San Fernando Valley owned by CBS, but which used to be Republic Pictures through the Saturday matinee era. It was not the first time I had been out to that studio: a number of years before I had been invited by someone from the Jim Henson operation to come out to watch the filming of some scenes for *The Muppet Movie*. Out of curiosity, I took them up on their invitation. The studio had a man-made lake, which the production company turned into a swamp for the opening number featuring Kermit the Frog (I've been told that lake had also served as the lagoon for "Gilligan's Island").

The scene involved Kermit sitting on a log in the middle of the swamp, singing and playing the banjo. I could see two young people controlling the

movement of Kermit's legs and his strumming of the banjo, but I was wondering how they were managing his acting. It turned out that Jim Henson, who was both the voice and chief puppeteer behind Kermit, was stretched out in some kind of container down on the bottom of the lake, with one hand up inside the puppet, and a television monitor balanced on his chest so he could see what was going on up top!

I felt very comfortable with the Henson group. It was the closest group of people that I had come across in the years since I had left Disney's that reminded me of Disney's in their dedication to what they did and the amount of time they took to make it right.

In his flurry of pitching and selling shows, David Kirschner had gotten NBC to come very close to a commitment on a prime-time, ninety-minute film starring the Flintstones. He was able to pull a script together pretty quickly and then approached Bill Hanna about producing it for him. By this point, Bill and Joe were not working together on the same projects as much as they were focusing on their own pet projects. Bill's response to David's request was positive, but then he added that he didn't know anyone in the studio who could help him out with it except me. I found out about this one day when Jayne Barbera, Joe's daughter, and then the production head for the studio, tapped very quietly on my office door, stepped in, and broached the subject of my supervising the creative end of the project. If Bill really wanted me to do it, I told her, I would do it, but under one condition: that Bill himself do the directorial timing on the film. "Oh, thank God!" she said, and left the office.

The next thing I know I had a script for something called "I Yabba Dabba Doo" in my hands. The story involved Fred's daughter Pebbles and Barney's son Bamm-Bamm growing up and getting married (which always seemed inevitable). Looking over the script I decided, what the hell . . . if it had really come to the point where they had to come and beg me to take part in the damned thing, then I'll take it over completely. I personally storyboarded the entire show from top to bottom. I got help from an artist named Bill Proctor, whom I eventually assigned to handle the layouts, and who did a good job.

Right around the time I was finishing up the storyboard, David Kirschner had another meeting with NBC and they decided—now that three months' worth of work had been invested in the pre-production of the show—that they didn't really want to air an animated movie after all. At that time animation was not particularly high on NBC's priority list, even on Saturday mornings. So David, being David, said, "All right," turned around, and walked right

over to ABC and asked if they would be interested. The network representative replied that they would, but there was a catch.

"What's that?" David asked.

"We'd like *two* of them instead of one."

The second one was "Hollyrock-A-Bye Baby" and it involved Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm having twins. I storyboarded that one myself as well, and Bill once again handled the direction. Raquel Welch was cast as a guest voice in that one. As she walked into the sound booth and took her place behind the mike, the recording director Gordon Hunt exhibited an expression that might be best described as "agog." Or maybe "agape." But for her part, Ms. Welch was nervous. "I've never done this before," she told Gordon. "I'm not sure what to do. Please tell me how you want me to do these lines."

Gordon replied, "Well, why don't you just go ahead and try it, and we'll see what happens?"

The character was supposed to have a sultry voice, which Raquel provided, and when she was finished with a take, Gordon turned back to me for my opinion. I just nodded. I thought it fit the requirements of the character perfectly well. So Raquel Welch left the studio happy, and she was probably even happier a few days later when she received a sizable paycheck for what amounted to only a few minutes' worth of work. Was Raquel's performance notably better than one that June Foray or Janet Waldo could have provided? I doubt it. It was simply a reflection of the changing times, and the fact that mainstream Hollywood had suddenly become aware of animation. But it was probably the only time in her career that Raquel Welch was cast solely for her voice.

In the final accounting these television features were not masterpieces, perhaps, but I had a lot of fun working on them because I was able to simply draw, and not have to worry about movement.

Bill Hanna was quite happy under David's regime because all he wanted to do was help out. On one occasion Bill's assistance involved far more than his usual activities at the studio. It was on "The Last Halloween," and David had cast an acquaintance of his to be the show's narrator, but it did not come across. The voice sounded too young. David wanted something more avuncular, the kind of warm, older voice that you expect to hear telling a fairy tale. At one point he said that the kind of voice he was looking for was someone who sounded like Bill. We talked over the possibility of actually having Bill record the narration, and ultimately David asked him. It was not an easy sell; Bill was uncertain that he would be able to do a decent job of it, and continued to express his trepidation all through the recording session. But he need not

have worried. Using Bill's voice was an example of a good, intuitive hunch on David's part that turned out just fine.

Joe's situation was different. He did not relish the idea of giving up control, and he went head to head with David over the direction of the company. Before too long, David would open up a conversation with him by saying, "I know you don't like a lot of my ideas, but . . ." and Joe, finally realizing his situation, started to back off and throw up his hands. In fact, Joe started throwing up his hands so much that there were some days he looked like the referee at a football game.

A classic example was during the making of 1990's *Jetsons: The Movie*, the studio's first theatrical feature to utilize its classic characters since *The Man Called Flintstone* a quarter-century earlier. Bill and Joe were listed as producers and directors of the film, but the truth was they had a parting of ways early on in the making of the picture. Universal was putting up quite a bit of the money for it, and Bruce Johnson was acting as a liaison between what Universal was doing and what Hanna-Barbera was doing. Unfortunately, the two never quite came together. The ways that Universal and their people were bending this film finally caused Joe to resign himself in frustration and accept he just couldn't do much more with it. Bill, however, stubbornly stuck with it.

I managed to creep out of it along with Joe. I didn't particularly want to take a shot at designing any of the characters myself, because I had lost interest by this time, but I did hire other designers for it. Everything on that film seemed to be in a state of flux. The music director over at Universal would come up with songs for the film overnight—literally. He was a twenty-four-hour songwriter. Every couple days he would come back to the studio to play for us a whole slew of different versions and different approaches and we would pick one out of the pile. Not that any of them, including the ones used in the film, were particularly memorable. Certainly none had the lasting power of "Eep Opp Ork Ah-Ah."

For one of the songs, Bruce came back and said that Universal would really like something graphically different on it. Before I did anything I checked with Joe, but that was after the point by which he had pretty much given up. He said, "Well, if you want it different, go ahead and make it different." I thought, "Okay, you *asked* for it." I picked up the phone and called an animator named Bob Kurtz, who ran his own small company, Kurtz and Friends, and who was known for having a different outlook on things.

"You interested in doing a song for the *Jetsons* movie?" I asked him, and he replied: "Hell yes!" So he went ahead and laid out the animation for the

song. When Joe finally looked at it, he said, "Boy, that's not really the Jetsons, is it?"

I did not remind him of his comment about making it different.

But I did go back to Bob and request that he at least make the characters look like who they're supposed to look like. Otherwise, I gave him a free hand to do whatever he wanted. When Universal saw it, they reported back saying, "You know, that's really one of the best things in the film."

If there was any kind of public controversy about the film, it came through Universal's decision to replace the voice of Janet Waldo, who had played Judy Jetson since the original series and who still sounded exactly the same some thirty years later, with a then-hot pop singer named Tiffany. At first, Tiffany was only supposed to sing the Judy songs, in order to give the film some teenage marquee value, while Janet did the dialogue. But at some point, somebody thought there would be more continuity, and greater publicity value, to redub the role exclusively with Tiffany.

The problem was, animated films take a long time to produce, and by 1990, when the picture was released, Tiffany's career was already on the wane. At least that was the impression I got when I had gotten on a plane to go to New York, for one of those quick pitch trips right around the time we were making the movie, and happened to be seated next to this young girl. I asked her, "Have you ever heard of Tiffany?"

She said, "I think so," and sort of shrugged it off.

I figured, Oh, god, are we in trouble! The punch line, of course, is that fifteen years after the fact, Janet Waldo is still working while for most people, saying the name "Tiffany" automatically brings to mind a lamp. Even a photo spread in *Playboy* was unable to revive the singer's career.

For fans of "The Jetsons," the voice substitution was particularly disturbing since the entire original cast from 1962 had been called back, including Penny Singleton and George O'Hanlon. Joe Barbera was very loyal in that respect, and insisted on using George, who at that point was suffering from a variety of physical afflictions including blindness, which meant he could not read from a script. To get George's lines, Gordon Hunt would first say the line, and then George would repeat it in character into the microphone. To counteract the effects of age in George's voice (he was then in his mid-seventies), the tracks were very slightly sped up, making them sound lighter.

Jetsons: The Movie would prove to be the last work George O'Hanlon would ever do. He had been called in to do some pick-up lines for the film, which he completed satisfactorily. Practically as soon as Gordon told him that he was finished, he suffered a stroke. Joe, who was there, immediately called the

hospital for an ambulance, but it was already too late. George died with his boots on.

Another of our projects from this time died without ever having been seen in public. It was an hour-long film called *Rock Odyssey*, which had originally been intended as an ABC special. It was a straightforward rock version of *Fantasia* and would contain four segments representing the music of the 1950s through the present (then the 1970s), all interpreted through animation. I worked up the presentation boards for it, and Michael Eisner, who was then a junior executive at ABC, loved the idea. But the network and the studio could not come to terms regarding the cost that would be required to produce it.

The project continued on even after ABC dropped out, and over the course of several years it was re-envisioned as a feature. Because he had done so well on *Heidi's Song*—and because he was at the time regarded as the golden boy of the studio in the executive suites—Robert Taylor was chosen to take the project over and do the story direction. Bob took the film and ran with it. As it turned out, though, he should have kept on running.

It did go into production, and even though Bill and Joe were officially listed as the directors, they didn't have much to do with it. In fact, Bill didn't really understand the project at all. He was much more at ease with barber-shop quartet music than rock 'n' roll anyway. But what made things worse was Bob's decision that the classic songs which would be used as the driving forces for the animation would be completely re-recorded. I tried to argue with him that the easiest thing in the world was to buy the rights to the song and even the original recording of it, but he was adamant: he wanted something new and fresh.

The final result looked a lot more like something Ralph Bakshi would do—both in terms of graphic design and its anti-establishment edge. Joe took one look at it and knew it was unreleasable in its current state. He took Bob Taylor off the project and called in a veteran storyboard man named Bill Perez, and charged him to do whatever it took to make the film work. Bill was a capable guy, but there was not much he could do. He used to come into my office to talk about it, and I would always try to hustle him back out, for fear that he was going to break down and start sobbing.

A finished ninety-minute version of *Rock Odyssey* does exist, but it has never been shown anywhere publicly. And while there is no question that it is different from anything else we had ever done, before or since, it stands as proof that "different" does not necessarily mean "better."

The punch line to all this was a comment Bob Taylor made to me after the thing imploded. "I kept wanting to come down and get your opinion of what I

was doing," he told me, "but Joe always prevented me." Apparently every time Bob wanted to get me involved, Joe would simply say, "No, you don't need to be bothering him, just go do your thing."

I can't remember if I ever thanked Joe for that.

Right around this time, my past—and that of thousands of other Japanese Americans—was headline news. Congress in 1988 had enacted legislation officially expressing regret for the wartime internment camps, and then-president Ronald Reagan signed it into law. It allowed for reparations to the tune of \$20,000 per interned individual. When you really think about what we had lost—three years out of our lives—it was not a whole helluva lot. It certainly did not come close to replacing all the actual, practical, material things that were lost by all of us who were forced into the camps. We had been innocent people sitting around considering ourselves to be Americans, and the next thing we knew, we were behind barbed wire. Twenty thousand dollars does not exactly cover that. But it was a token, a beginning, and the first step to the apology, which came officially from Reagan's successor, George H. W. Bush. That was frankly of more interest to those of us who were interned than the money. At least my mother was alive to receive both.

The apology and reparations, coming nearly fifty years after the fact, had another effect: it was the impetus for my getting more heavily involved in groups like the Japanese American National Museum and meeting other people who were involved and speaking to various groups around the country about the internment.

On the professional front, I was continuing to get involved in new and different areas, such as theme parks. In the late-1970s Bill and Joe had become involved with a water park called Marineland, located in Rancho Palos Verdes, south of Los Angeles, but that was more a case of branding than anything else, with stage shows featuring costumed Hanna-Barbera characters taking place around the performing sea creature tanks. One time the three of us went down there on a promotional trip. It was decided that we should be photographed with one of the big orcas they had there (their two main stars were named "Corky" and "Orky"), so we got down close to the edge of the tank while the photographers circled around us. The idea was that we were supposed to be thinking about using the whale as a star for a new cartoon series.

At some point someone came up with the brilliant idea of having me stand there with a sketch pad making drawings of this whale. That was all well and good, but then the other shoe dropped. "You know what would make a sensa-

tional shot?" they asked. "If you would be sketching while the whale goes into one of his big leaps."

So I got my pad and stood there beside the water, but Bill and Joe suddenly disappear. It's only me in the photo. Then I look up and see them sitting at the very top of the grandstand. Before I had time to stop and think about why, that damned whale jumped and the resulting splash came down on top of me like a tidal wave, practically drowning me. I was drenched and I smelled like every fish in the ocean had come over and embraced me. Meanwhile, Bill and Joe got back into their car and headed back to the studio. I got into my car too, but before I went back to work I stopped at home first for a shower.

Even without our participation, I recall Marineland looking a little like a cartoon, because everything there was out of square, just a little bit off-kilter, because of the unstable, shifting ground it was built on. I don't know whether that was a contributing factor or not, but not too many years later, Marineland went under (so to speak).

The new theme park project the studio had going was nowhere near as wet. It was a simulator ride for Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida, an attraction where the seats move in coordination with the action on the screen, and it took place on a rocket ship. While the rest of the studio was dealing with the computer generated rockets from *Jetsons: The Movie*, I was spending about half my time on the theme park ride film and having a lot more fun with it. The only part that became tiresome was constantly going across the freeway from the H-B studio to Universal Hollywood and each week sitting in one of those moving seats and okaying the footage. The *Jetsons* were perhaps the most fitting characters for a space ship ride, but they were not the only ones in the film. Also along were Yogi Bear, Scooby-Doo, and the *Flintstones*—kind of a Hanna-Barbera's Greatest Hits album.

A few other interesting projects were in development as well, including an animated adaptation of the "Lake Wobegon" stories of Garrison Keillor. An artist named Mike Mitchell did some concept art for this project, and Keillor was so enamored of them that he asked if he could keep one of the originals. But the project never really progressed from there.

Aside from being a fine artist, Mike was a very interesting person. He had a studio in his home in the San Fernando Valley where he sculpted and painted in oils, and his work had been exhibited in galleries in Paris and New York, but he tended to turn up his nose at Beverly Hills galleries. Mike got into the animation business to keep the money coming in, and wound up doing quite a bit of work with Friz Freleng over at Warner Bros. At Hanna-Barbera I used

him in the same fashion that Walt Disney used some of the fine arts people that he brought into the studio. While the material he turned out might not be usable to the project, just displaying it on the walls so that the rest of the staff could see it encouraged them to raise their thinking to a higher level and shake them out of the mindset of simply doing what was necessary for our everyday work.

The other pleasure of working with Mike was that he was an excellent cook, and he would occasionally invite me over to his house for lunch, which was always a fairly formal affair, with a main course prepared in a kind of French fashion, a loaf of fresh bread, and even wine. One time I asked him where he learned to cook like that, and he said: "There isn't an oil painter around that doesn't cook, because there is nothing to do while waiting for your oils to dry, so you take up some sort of hobby to pass the time."

Mike was also involved in visualizing an even more tantalizing project, which kicked around for years and years through Universal: an animated feature film of the Broadway musical *Cats*. It was Universal's property, but Hanna-Barbera got first crack at developing it, primarily through the efforts of a writer named Jeff Segal, who was bringing a lot of projects our way. I have sometimes used the word "huckster" to describe him, but in a positive way.

Mike Mitchell was very excited about *Cats* and did a series of impression sketches that were to be taken over to England and shown to Andrew Lloyd Webber, who was of course the composer behind the show. Unfortunately, Mike was not the one designated to go pitch the drawings to Lloyd Webber. That task fell to Jeff Segal and a studio producer named Kelly Ward. That decision upset Mike terribly. He said: "Why are *they* taking it? They don't know what they're talking about, they don't understand it! The guy they should be sending over there to talk to them about it, who understands what I've done, is *you*," he told me. When Jeff and Kelly came back they reported that Lloyd Webber was less than thrilled. That made Mike even more upset, since he felt that he could have gone through the back door at the composer's Really Useful Company and talked to his frequent director, Trevor Nunn, or his long-time designer, John Napier, whom he felt would have a better understanding of the concept.

But *Cats* ran away, at least from us, though it was still being talked about for the next several years over at Universal. Another Really Useful show, *Starlight Express*, was also talked about in terms of animation, but it never came to fruition either.

Organizationally, Hanna-Barbera was about to undergo yet another change. If it really had been Great American's primary objective to have David Kirsch-

ner build up the company for a potential deep-pockets buyer, they succeeded amazingly well. It was almost like David had fly-cast the bait out there to a big fish already swimming around, who took it hook, line, and sinker. The fish's name was Ted Turner.

I think Ted's instincts for wanting to buy the company were good. The idea of a cable network that showed nothing but cartoons really appealed to him. He had been so successful with specialty networks like CNN, so he figured why not go into the world of kids and animated films in general? We were at that time an untapped place, complete with a huge archive that was actually suited for television exhibition, as opposed to theatrical exhibition.

Once Ted took charge, more new people came in. A fellow named Scott Sassa, who was working with Ted, had a friend named Fred Seibert, and he talked Fred into taking over the studio . . . at least that was Fred's version, that he was coerced into it. They began to develop what would become the Cartoon Network, using the entire catalog of Hanna-Barbera, Ruby-Spears, and some of the old shorts from MGM, which Turner also owned. Between those three libraries, there was more than enough material to fill all the air-time that the network needed. Hitting the ground running with ready-to-go programming also gave them the opportunity to start developing their own material. It was almost like a five-year plan, similar to the building of a sports franchise, where you start to bring in new talent and send them through the minors, and bring them up, little by little, always looking about five years ahead. In reflection, I think they had a pretty good idea of what they were going to do and they did a good job of it.

There were a few missteps along the way, of course, both on and off camera. On the first day that Turner Broadcasting physically took charge of the Hanna-Barbera studio facilities, they seemed to act like one nation invading another. They stationed guards on the roof of the building and as people were exiting the property they were under very strict scrutiny. I did not experience this myself, but I heard from quite a few people that there were some pretty hairy experiences just trying to get in and out of work. It was a case of total overkill: you would have thought we were dealing in national security secrets instead of Saturday morning cartoons! Soon even the Turner people realized they had gone too far and after about two days of this, Scott Sassa was dispatched from Atlanta to Hollywood to offer formal apologies to the entire staff.

The public missteps included that new updated version of "Jonny Quest," which went nowhere fast, as did an experiment at Cartoon Network involving a real-time digitally animated character named "Moxie."

One pet project of Fred Seibert's proved to be a much better move for the new network. It was called "What A Cartoon!" and was a program of fifty or so cartoon short subjects, which were automatic pilots for potential series. Animators came in from all over the place to pitch cartoons, and the promising ones were commissioned. It was kind of a scattershot project, and frankly, there were an awful lot of rejectees, and deservedly so. But the program itself was a pretty good idea, and it ended up forming a foundation for fresh material to be added to the Hanna-Barbera inventory. In time, shows like "Dexter's Laboratory," "Cow and Chicken," "Johnny Bravo," and "The Powerpuff Girls" would begin to overtake the old archival stuff, and young animators like Genndy Tartakovsky and Craig McCracken were being seen as carrying on the H-B tradition.

For all that, though, a lot of those shows had short shelf-lives. "Powerpuff Girls," for instance, was a complete hit in all aspects, including the consumer products area, and did extremely well for about three or four years, and then it suddenly fell out of grace. It may have been that some of these shows just didn't have the same kind of substance in the characters themselves that allowed them to hold up. If you look at the characters who have lasted for a long, long time—Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, Scooby-Doo, Fred Flintstone—they each have a true, fully developed, in-depth personality. "Powerpuff" had a great deal of appeal in the actual look of the show and in the squeaky voices the trinket-like characters had, but you could almost predict that it was going to fade. "Dexter" had a bit more substance, but for some reason it never developed the product appeal. But there is no question that as a launching point, these shows did what they were required to do: they really established the Cartoon Network, in the same way that "Ruff and Reddy" established Hanna-Barbera back in 1957, even though that show was also pretty short-lived in itself.

Throughout all the changes of staff, management, and the kinds of shows we were doing, everybody at the studio felt relatively secure with Ted Turner and with Turner Broadcasting. Ted was then a novice in Hollywood, which made Bill and Joe and those of us who had been in Hollywood for fifty years or more feel like we had something special that we could contribute to fill a hole within the Turner organization, particularly in the animated film arena. Then everything changed again: Warner Bros. bought out Turner.

When the news first came down, a lot of us were standing there, half-stunned, wondering what was going to happen now, because Warner Bros. already had an established animation unit in place. It was run by Jean Mac-

Curdy, who had been a production executive with Hanna-Barbera in the 1980s. Now the fate of the studio was in her hands.

Almost immediately the modifications of personnel began. The unfortunate role of hatchet man fell to Jean's assistant, Scott Sederberg. Fred Seibert's entire cadre of people was disbanded and a lot of the artists were scattered, though the new management identified and kept the ones who seemed to be the most competent and moved them into Warners' consumer products operation at the main studio in Burbank. There was talk that we were going to be evicted from the Hanna-Barbera building on Cahuenga Boulevard that Bill and Joe had built in the early 1960s, and moved onto the lot as well, which turned out to be true—at least in terms of the eviction.

As I was beginning to wonder what, exactly, was going to happen with me, I got a phone call from Scott Sederberg, who told me: "I just heard from Jean and she was very concerned about telling you that nothing was going to change as far as you were concerned. She wanted to make sure that you understood that, and wanted you to relax, and she sends her love." And that was that.

Right around this time I was scheduled to receive a Winsor McCay lifetime achievement award from the International Animated Film Society ASIFA-Hollywood. Jean had agreed to present it to me at the black-tie awards ceremony. At one point she cracked: "Iwao has done so much that we are now showing on the Cartoon Network that we were thinking of calling it 'The Takamoto Network,' but we couldn't get all those letters into our checkerboard logo." (Since our old shows are now on a different cable network called Boomerang, and since "boomerang" has more letters than "Takamoto," perhaps I should bring this idea up again.)

But Jean's attitude and support helped greatly to ease my mind in the wake of this latest takeover. My continued employment seemed secure, but one question remained a total haze: What the hell was I going to actually be *doing*?

The answer came quickly, and I suddenly found myself inundated with requests to make trips to the various Warner Bros. stores that had opened up around the country, which sold Warners' licensed merchandise. Most of these stores had animation art galleries in them, offering both production cels and limited edition cels, and the company loved the idea of sending me around, along with a few other people from the studio, on a near-constant basis. For a while I was going on a minimum of one trip a month, all over the country, which gave me the chance to see the whole United States. It seemed like I

would eventually turn up in every city that had a population of a half million or so, making gallery appearances or signing cels. That took my mind off any thoughts I might have been entertaining about retiring.

Many of these trips were quite memorable, and occasionally my wife, Barbara, and I would arrange to extend our trips once we were off the company's nickel. We did that in both Hawaii and London. Once the trip was to Salt Lake City, Utah, and while I was there I noticed these two extremely tall, very good-looking young women shadowing us. They were clearly packing firearms. One was tailing me and the other was tailing Barbara. When I asked about them, I learned that they were local sheriff's deputies who were moonlighting as our security guards.

Why would we need armed guards in a place like Salt Lake City, which is not exactly the crime capital of the United States? All I can say is that there are some very strange people out there who sometimes begin to follow you around and insist that you stop and make a drawing for them. On occasion, their insistence can become frightening.

One of the most persistent of this breed was a woman from Australia, whom I encountered while Barbara and I were staying in a hotel in Perth, on the country's west coast. I had just done a few television interviews in Melbourne, and it seemed like I had become well known throughout southern Australia. Immediately after we checked into the hotel in Perth we began to get phone calls from this woman who insisted on introducing me to her twelve-year-old son who, according to his mom, was the next Michelangelo and Picasso combined. She was being incredibly persistent and tenacious, making call after call, and neither Barbara nor I could not figure out how she had even managed to find us. It turned out that she had sat down and called every major hotel in Perth until she found the one at which we were staying!

Finally Barbara called down to the front desk and asked if we could give them a list of names of people whose calls we would accept—this woman, obviously, not being on it. The front desk was very good about it and said checking the list would be no problem. Then the clerk laughed and said: "You know, we had Elton John here last week, and didn't get one single telephone call. I guess we have a *real* celebrity here now!"

The reason I was in Australia in the first place, and the reason I became recognizable to the country, was that I had put in an appearance on something called "The Footy Show," which was the highest-rated show in all of Australia. It was a sports/comedy show centered on Australian rules football, which is unlike rugby or American football or soccer—in fact, it is one of the most amazing sports that I've ever seen, played by equally amazing athletes. They

were dressed very much like soccer players and wore no pads that I could see, but they hit and tackle each other like our football players. For athletes that size they were incredibly agile and well coordinated.

What made "The Footy Show" unique was that, while it was about Australian rules football, they were unable to show a single bit of video or film from any game that's been played, because another channel had the exclusive rights to the games. So the show consisted of a panel of three or four ex-football players who sit and chatter about inside stuff, including locker-room talk, while the audience sat at tables and were served refreshments.

My appearance on the show had been set up by the Silver K Galleries in Australia, for which I had created a limited edition cel featuring various Hanna-Barbera characters along with the image of a legendary Australian football star named Stephen Kernahan, who had just announced his retirement after his current season. The cels were being auctioned off for a local charity. Steve Kernahan proved to be a huge, delightful guy who was totally enslaved by his two little daughters, and his record was the primary topic of discussion by the panel. Meanwhile, they had asked me if I could take a poster-sized photograph of the show's host, Sam Newman, which had a chunk of space above his head, and fill it with drawings of several of our characters.

Steve and I were seated on a couch which was removed from the panel and the host, and from time to time the camera would shoot over my shoulder to see how I was progressing. I don't think they quite realized how quickly these drawings can be executed, so each time they cut away to me there were more and more characters appearing around Sam's head. Finally the host asked me what I thought of the show, now that I had had a chance to really see what was going on around me. "I think it's a fascinating show," I answered honestly, "it's terrific, but I can't understand a damn thing that any of you have been talking about!" Of course, this comment went out across the entire continent. From that point on, I became a celebrity in southern Australia.

The following evening, Barbara and I were wandering down this dark street looking for an interesting restaurant, and the sort of character that you don't really want to run into on a dark street started walking toward us, staring at us. Finally he stopped directly in front of us. He said, "Well, do you understand Australian football a little better now?" The bruiser just wanted to stop and shake my hand, having recognized me from "The Footy Show."

After we had greeted the man, we went on with our search for a place to eat dinner. We finally found ourselves in an alley that had two Italian restaurants across from each other. We picked one and walked in, but it was very, very crowded. We were thinking of leaving when someone there said, "Just be

patient and we'll set up a table for you downstairs, where it is quiet." They did that, and while we were dining the owner came over and he presented us with a complimentary bottle of wine. At the end of the evening we learned that there was to be no check because dinner was on him. This sort of thing happened to us repeatedly down under. Australia is populated with extremely, extremely friendly people.

Another trip we took to London was equally memorable. I was there to appear on a television program called "The Big Breakfast," which as the title implies was a morning show. But I was not prepared for how early in the morning I was expected to be there. Either the host of the show, or the director, or both, believed that interviews should not be completely spontaneous, but rather should be rehearsed. That meant getting up at four o'clock in the morning and being picked up by a car and driven to God knows where to this studio, and then arriving and sitting in this waiting room until everything was ready. Making an appearance on that same show were a couple of American rap stars; not being a particular fan of rap music, I didn't know who they were, but they must have been big in the industry because when they walked in they commanded the attention of everyone. They were also big in the traditional sense: both of them clearly spent a lot of time in the gym. They were built like Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Finally it was time for me to make my appearance before the cameras. As I went out on stage, the young woman who was serving as our escort in London remained in the green room. Later she told me that while all the preliminaries were going on leading up to my appearance, the people waiting in the room continued the idolization of these two rap stars. The buzz was drowning out the sound of the TV monitor in there. But she said that once the announcement came over that I had been introduced on the show, the two raised their hands and said: "Respect." Immediately all noise in the waiting room ceased at that single word, because they wanted to hear what I was going to say.

Apparently they were Scooby-Doo fans.

Another trip to Buenos Aires was worth it simply for the exceptional high tea held at the Alvear Palace Hotel. One of the most memorable, though, was closer to home. Barbara and I, thinking we were embarking on a trip that was destined to be a little less exotic than those to the various foreign countries we had visited, found ourselves in a city in the eastern part of the United States, where I was to make an appearance at a gallery operated by a man whose name was not Corleone or Soprano, but it well could have been. There was a strong sense of . . . let's say *family affiliation* about him. Our driver tried

to make everything as interesting as possible, telling us stories as he drove us through the city. He pointed out a church and told us: "That's where a lot of the Italians attend church, and right across from it there is an apartment house where the FBI has a surveillance camera set up. They are recording every single individual walking in and out of that church, and have for a year or more."

If that were not exciting enough, we were invited to dinner one night at the home of the gallery owner, which we had some trouble finding, since it was on a street that was not listed on any map of the area. Once there we found ourselves surrounded by about three dozen other people there for dinner, all of whom were under the surveillance that our driver had mentioned. The entire event looked like a scene from a Francis Ford Coppola movie. We survived the evening quite well, and at the end of it, the wife of one of the men present commented that they were not going to be able to attend the gallery showing the next night because of a family wedding. Later, as we were laughing about the spectacle the evening provided, Barbara confessed that she had a terrible urge to ask: "Is it going to be a family wedding or a *family* wedding." She didn't, of course. All I kept thinking was, thank God it was me attending this event and not Joe Barbera, who despite his *padrone* act back at the studio, would have been genuinely uncomfortable finding himself in the middle of the real thing.

Strangely enough, for someone who is an introvert at heart like me, I never suffered from stage fright or undue nervousness making these appearances. To ensure the fact that I would be at ease, I developed something of a routine, whereby I would sit behind a table and meet people and sign various things, and then take a break, after which I would give about a twenty-minute chalk-talk on an easel. I would chiefly be talking at random, but primarily drawing. I found out that watching an artist draw just fascinates people. After that I'd talk about the various aspects of the animation industry, and that served to put me at ease.

As I have said, this was also the time that Scooby-Doo seemed to be at his peak. Scooby had always been popular, but in the mid-nineties it seems he just took off into the stratosphere, so Warners was busy developing a huge program of consumer products material whose licensees needed a huge amount of artwork on Scooby, to use as style guides, among other things. I was quite busy, and I was enjoying myself. Thirty-some-odd years earlier, when I had first joined Hanna-Barbera, the furthest thing from my mind was that someday I would become the company's public representative, but that was the way things worked out.

This is not to say that I had been completely dismissed from working hands-on with Scooby and the gang in actual shows. It did not take Warners long to conclude that, out of the four thousand or so characters in the Hanna-Barbera library, Scooby was the star, our version of Bugs Bunny or Mickey Mouse. Among the exploitation plans for the character was a direct-to-video feature film called *Scooby-Doo on Zombie Island*, the first of many such home video projects. *Zombie Island* was a good solid mystery, and its producer, a young man named Davis Doi, made a habit of coming in to see me whenever he sensed that he needed a section of Scooby-and-Shaggy material, played out more for comedy. I would just sit down and board the sequences out for him.

But something more ominous than changing roles within the company, or even changing levels of control, was happening at Hanna-Barbera, and it was happening at the top. It was increasingly becoming clear that something was not quite right with Bill Hanna himself. The studio's Rock of Gibraltar was beginning to show signs of fissions.

AN ERA ENDS; A LEGACY LIVES ON

By the time of the Warner Bros. takeover of Hanna-Barbera, both Bill and Joe were in their mid-eighties. Men of lesser energy, creativity, and enthusiasm would have retired long before, but they were both still coming in to work every day, helped by a very dedicated young man named Carleton Clay, who served as personal assistant to both of them.

Of the two, Joe was the one who acted more like a CEO. In the one-time bank building that Warners had converted into their animation operation, he was given an office suite that was large enough to contain all his trophies, awards (which included damn near everything except the seven Oscars he and Bill won, which were still in the hands of the family of Fred Quimby, their old MGM producer), toys, artwork, and other assorted stuff.

While Bill's office was the same size as Joe's, it had a very different atmosphere. Bill kept no awards on display and very little artwork. Instead, his office was filled with electronic equipment and photos of his family and his boat. To me, though, this was the best office in that building since the view swept across the entire San Fernando Valley. You could see Sepulveda Dam, the 405 and 101 freeways, the Warner Bros. main studio lot in Burbank, Universal and Disney's on each side, and on a clear day you could see all the way out to Glendale, which was about twenty miles away. It was a great sight. Bill's office was also the most popular with the animators, because included in that panoramic view were several apartment buildings that had saunas and pools on their roofs, where young women occasionally did some sunbathing. I used to tell Bill that I always knew when the girls were up there, because the floor would begin to tilt from the weight of all the guys who had suddenly rushed to that side of the building.

Looking out over the entirety of the Valley and reminiscing about it was

one of his favorite things to do (though I think the sunbathers scored fairly high on that list as well). He would point at Sepulveda Boulevard, running next to the Warners building, shake his head, and say: "I can remember when that was a dirt road." Bill had been in Los Angeles since the 1920s, and he could remember everything that had changed since then.

While we were still in our old building on Cahuenga Boulevard, I used to love to take Bill to lunch at a Japanese restaurant called Katsu on Hillhurst in Hollywood (we also used to frequent a place in Hollywood called "The Old Ladies Home" that served lunches in addition to housing a charitable organization . . . we could always find the interesting places to eat). The truth is I like taking just about anyone to Japanese restaurants. I remember the first time I took Jerry Eisenberg to one, and watched him attempt to manage chopsticks for the first time. He nearly redecorated the interior walls and ceiling with rice. But the primary reason for me to go to Katsu with Bill was not the food (though the food was fine, and Bill's wife, Violet, liked having him go there because it was healthy), but because as we drove along Franklin Avenue, he would tell me about the old days of the city. He would point out where his daughters went to school, or the site of some long-gone studio where he had started as a cel-wiper, or the bank across the street he used to walk over to . . . memory after memory, and it would never be the same stories.

Bill's long-term memory was phenomenal.

Unfortunately, his short-term memory was starting to fail.

It was a gradual thing and not really that surprising for a man of his age. But little by little, we would get hints that Bill's capabilities were being reduced. Violet began to insist on driving him to work, and eventually the studio hired a driver for him. Unfortunately, this assistant was not as interested in helping Bill as he was in helping himself to Bill's car. He completely took advantage of his position, doing things like deciding to take the car on the weekends to go down to San Diego. More than once this man had an accident with the car, but refused to take responsibility for it.

Right around the time this was going on, Bill threw himself into a book project with a co-writer who also managed to take advantage of his situation. Occurrences like this were hugely significant clues that Bill was failing, because in the old days, nobody would have been allowed to take advantage of him.

I had always been on good terms with both Bill and Joe. In the old building, I used to make it a point to drop by Bill's penthouse office several times a week, ideally once each day, just to talk to him a few minutes. Sometimes

I'd stay for a half hour or so. I considered that part of my job. I made it so, anyway.

As a result Bill became quite dependent on me. During the Turner regime the studio was working on a feature film called *Once Upon a Forest*, which David Kirschner was producing. For whatever reason, David had gotten himself into quite a bit of trouble on that film. He managed to pick the wrong people to guide it through for him, it was way over budget, and there was no end in sight. The studio in Taipei, which was doing the actual animation production work, would complain that they just could not cope with the first-stage material that was being fed to them by the people from Hanna-Barbera, particularly the layouts. It seemed that the wife of one of the film's directors was in charge of layout on the picture, and she insisted on incredibly detailed layout drawings that were not only unnecessary but expensive and hugely labor intensive to create. They may have been fine drawings, but that just was not the way you produced an animated film.

Finally, David asked Bill if he would go over to Taipei for several weeks and straighten things out, and Bill readily agreed, happy to be able to help. Throughout David's tenure as head of Hanna-Barbera, Bill had always been good about letting him know that he was available for any kind of help that he could provide. Even though the studio was no longer theirs, both he and Joe retained this tremendous loyalty to it. It was, after all, their names that were still at the top of the building. They were the ones who would be identified with whatever came out of the studio.

Bill flew over to Taiwan to try and rescue the film. Before long I started to get phone calls from Taipei. Bill needed to talk to someone about the horrible things he was beginning to unearth over there. Joe at that point was onto other things so Bill was not really able to bend his ear about the situation as he might have done in the past. But I was there, and Bill knew that I would understand what he was saying and, more important, I would let him vent over the phone lines. As a result, we got to be quite close during these years, much more so than we had been in the thirty or so years prior, during which time our relationship had been more of a professional one, built upon mutual respect.

There were so many problems with the film that Bill's stay in Taipei extended from the proposed two or three weeks to three months. Violet made a couple trips over there to be with him for a while, and when she came back, she would tell me: "God, you're such a life-saver, because you're the one person that he feels confident that he can call and know that you're going to

completely understand where his frustration is coming from." After the Taipei difficulties, our relationship became closer and more personal, and I became more of a longtime friend and confidant.

From that standpoint, I could see even more evidence that Bill was fading. His ability to assess the quality of work became more tolerant. For his entire career he had been an outspoken stickler for quality, even within the restrictions of television animation, but he was now letting things slide by that he once would have blown his stack over.

Even so, he continued to work. He even directed one more cartoon himself, one of those shorts from the "What A Cartoon!" program. Not only was he the hands-on director, but he also conducted the orchestra for some of the music recording.

When Bill Hanna died at the age of ninety in 2001, it came as a bit of a surprise to me, because even with his ailments, I did not expect it to happen quite so soon. There was a private service for him at a church in North Hollywood, with quite a large group in attendance. I talked to several of his family members and they all made the same sort of comment: "You don't know how many times your name would come up in conversation at home."

After the services there was a lunch given by Violet at the Sportsman's Lodge, an old restaurant out in Studio City. I think this one was mostly for the family, but some of us who knew and had worked with him for a long time were invited as well. Ray Patterson, one of Bill and Joe's animators practically from the start of Tom and Jerry, was there, and I remember his falling into a near conniption . . . not out of grief, but because Violet had not provided any liquor. It simply never occurred to Vi to have a bar set up anywhere. Ray was almost in disbelief that you couldn't get a drink! But Bill in his last years was no longer a drinker. Ray was not an excessive drinker either, but he was widely known for his two-martini lunches. Always two: it never varied. Finally his daughter ran off to the bar at the Sportsmen's Lodge and brought two martinis back to him. Ray died a year or two later, well into his nineties, none the worse for wear for those two-martini lunches.

Hanna-Barbera had not been that active prior to Bill's death, but with his passing, its shutdown as a separate company was nearly complete. I was still in demand on behalf of Warner Bros. to travel the country and represent Hanna-Barbera, and I was also donating time to the Japanese American National Museum in downtown Los Angeles, which had contacted me in its formative days because my work was already well known.

Right at the museum's beginning years in the 1980s, they had solicited me regarding the possibility of an advisory capacity with a few other people, re-

garding publicity. That never really came about because it coincided with the peak period for Hanna-Barbera, and I didn't have the time. But I did begin to discover how many professional nikkeis, second- and third-generation Japanese, there were in this country, in this very, very miniscule minority that we really are. I don't think there's more than about a quarter of a million of us here today, even now. Many are in the medical professions; some are architects, designers, positions such as that.

In early 2001, the museum called to say that they would like to present me with a Lifetime Achievement Award. I was, I believe, the second person in the museum's history to receive the award (Ann Curry, the NBC newscaster, who is half-Japanese, had received it the year before). The award ceremony was held in April and I shared the Lifetime Achievement recognition with the actress Pat Suzuki, who had starred on Broadway in the musical *Flower Drum Song*. She is an amazing woman, and that night she got on stage to sing and dance. Scott Sassa, who had been involved with Hanna-Barbera during the Turner era, and who later became the West Coast head of NBC, received the Annual Achievement Award. That evening I also had the chance to meet Daniel Inouye, the senator from Hawaii, and the award was presented to me by Norman Mineta, the former secretary of transportation. This was quite a prestigious award, and I am very proud of it.

I was also satisfied with the way a brand-new cartoon on which Joe and I had been working for a number of years turned out. It was one last Tom and Jerry short called "KarateGuard." When it came out in 2005, a lot of the press emphasized how Joe had been credited as its creator, and some wondered just how involved he had actually been in its production. The truth is, he was involved the whole way. It was his idea and he came up with the story, thumb-nailing it on little slips of paper, the way he used to work in his MGM days. When he asked me if I would storyboard it for him, and I was happy to do it. I worked up the boards and then the studio put it in the hands of two younger animators, Spike Brandt and Tony Cervone, who are specialists in emulating the styles of the old Warners cartoon masters, like Chuck Jones. The two are very hardworking, dedicated animators, and they loved working with it, but they had several other projects at the studio at the same time, so they would get around to the short in between their regular assignments.

Spike and Tony were very careful in exposing their rough footage to Joe and getting him to give them a criticism on whatever they were doing—and straighten out anything that he felt they were doing that could be brought more into his line of thinking. In particular, they were able to adhere to Joe's number-one rule of animating Tom, which is to keep him feline. "They forget

that he's a *cat*," Joe would bemoan whenever he saw an unsuccessful rendition of Tom and Jerry by other hands. He felt that too many latter-day animators made him too anthropomorphic (a fate also suffered at times by Scooby-Doo).

They worked on the short over a period of three years and it turned out quite well. It benefited tremendously from Joe's ability to know how to play out a gag in multiple sequence, and all the things that they used to do so well in those days, that so many of the younger writers don't even know about. It was exhibited in a theater in West Hollywood for award consideration and was very well received. It received an Annie nomination from the International Animated Film Society. For my part, it was nice to see something that was turned out within the studio environment that you could actually look at and say, "That's good!"

Not everybody at the studio achieved the same level of success. Once during the latter years I came into Joe's office just to say hello and visit, and I found him looking over a storyboard that one of the new guys had done and had sent up for his review and approval. "Take a look at this," he said, and I could hear the tone of disgust in his voice. "Could you do anything with this?" I looked at it and saw the work of an artist who could sketch reasonably well, but who had little understanding of how to craft a story, how to stage a scene, how to demonstrate characterization, or much of anything else that would lead to the production of a quality cartoon. After a few moments, I said: "Well, Joe, if you want I could spit on it for you." At least that lightened his mood.

"KarateGuard" was to be the last work of Joe Barbera, who died only a few days before Christmas in 2006. He was ninety-five. To say that his passing signals the end of an era is undeniably true, but I think the era might actually have ended a few years beforehand. There had not been a lot for Joe to do in those final years, except sign some animation art and go pitch ideas and characters to the new guys, a few of which were accepted, but he continued to come in to work. I always made it a point to drop by his office to chat and visit each day. So did Jerry Eisenberg, who would always try to engage him in banter and act as straight man for Joe's quips. Joe's doctor told us that this was one of the best things we could do for him to keep his mind active.

This kind of banter had been such a part of Joe Barbera. In all the years I had known him, he had never been much for heaping lavish praise on his people, preferring to greet his longtime friends with witty retorts instead of terms of endearment. Joe expressed his regard for people and their abilities

through the amount of trust he put in them and the responsibility he gave them. But there was one time where he let his reserve down a bit where I was concerned. It was on the night in 1996 when I received my Winsor McCay Award from ASIFA-Hollywood. Joe wasn't there, but he sent a letter, which was read from the stage by Leonard Maltin:

When Bill Hanna and I decided to go out on our own and create our own studio in the late 1950s, there were a lot of decisions we had to make, decisions that could have made the difference between success and failure. As far as I'm concerned, one of the best decisions we made in those early years was in hiring Iwao Takamoto. Iwao is truly a cartoonist's cartoonist, and his great gift for design quickly revealed itself to us. Whenever we had a character in mind that we wanted Iwao to draw, we knew that it was not a question of his coming up with a good design or a bad design—with Iwao, it was always the right design. This honor is more than fitting for a man who has contributed so much to our medium, and even though I am unable to be there in person, on behalf of Bill and myself I want to say congratulations to our friend Iwao Takamoto.

Unfortunately, the videotape of that evening seems to have disappeared.

Among my current duties at the studio is remaining available for any of the younger guys who want to come in for advice on whatever they are working on. Honestly, there is occasionally not much I can say about a project, particularly those that utilize our classic characters without the filmmakers' seeming to understand them, but I try to offer whatever help I can. And there are a lot of very talented animators out there today, but it seems to me that without exception, they all share one weakness: there is too much slickness coming from their work. It seems to be based on a world of Hollywood movies rather than on the real world, certainly the real world that existed before them. Underneath all of the marvelous craftsmanship they possess, the work often lacks understanding or awareness.

If any young artist comes to me and asks me to identify a good school for them to attend for art training, I always encourage them to first look at a school that offers a lot of liberal arts courses in order to find out what's going on and what went on and where they come from and what this culture is made of and why, because in the best animation that came out of the 1930s and 1940s, all the way into the fifties, there was an awareness of philosophy and history that I just don't see today. Instead of being the illusion of life, to

use Frank and Ollie's term, so much of today's animation tends to be an imitation of that illusion of life—something based on past animation, once removed, rather than being based on real life itself.

I'm not sure the trend toward computer animation is helping, either. If you look at the films of somebody like Canadian animator Frederic Back, you just marvel at what he does and how it stands up to any piece of computerized animation—in fact, it is superior to what they're capable of doing with computers, which I think has only swept over the surface. I wish I could describe to some of the young animators and producers of today how much importance there is to the actual sheer discovery of the things that you create out of this blank surface, in which a character can do the things that you see an actual living, breathing person do. You can just sit there and marvel at what comes out of your hand and your mind. While there have been some computer-animated films that stand as good films, I find the animation itself too mechanical; it's a little like standing outside and directing what is going to happen, rather than being the actor.

In recent years it seems to me that computer imagery has reached a sort of impasse in terms of technical advancement. Over the last six years or so, you could almost chart the advancements on a graph, with a steep climb upward year by year. Now, however, it seems to have hit a plateau, and there is not much more that can be achieved. But who knows . . . one of these days there might be an entire breakthrough that will bring computer animation closer to hand-drawn animation in terms of achieving more subjectivity than objectivity.

This is the sort of thing that Frank and Ollie were so good at explaining in their books, the hands-on instinct that one gets when creating a character. I think that one of the reasons a character like Scooby-Doo has become iconic is because we were able to find just the right level of stylization: he's a dog, but he's drawn as sort of a human being, and we could feel when it was right and when we had overstepped the line that would make the scene fall flat. That is the instinctive part.

All of the trends and all of the advice and the teachings that I benefited from over my career, especially from the members of the Nine Old Men, are still somewhere deeply ingrained in my subconscious. Walt may be gone, Bill and Joe may be gone, eight of the Nine Old Men may be gone, Disney Animation itself may virtually be gone, having been replaced by Pixar, but I continue to carry all of those things with me. And throughout the industry, when people say that Hanna-Barbera influenced so much of the design work that is going on today, I believe that I was influential in contributing to the develop-

ment of that approach to styling shows, so I guess you could make the argument that the industry is carrying a little bit of me with it as well.

But some things have not changed over the years. One of my favorite activities these days is taking cruises with my wife, Barbara, and just sitting and watching what is going on around me, and then later sitting down and sketching my impressions of the sites and people I saw as a record of them. It is not unlike what I used to do as a teen at Manzanar.

And I still have hope of finding those drawings that I made so long ago. When my mother passed away, only a couple years ago, she was in possession of several old trunks filled with . . . who knows what. My family and I are in the process of going through those trunks, in the hopes that maybe my Manzanar sketch books will be stashed safely away inside.

Until then, I will keep observing, keep passing on the knowledge I have gained over my life, and keep drawing. Maybe that term I continue to wrestle with uncomfortably—"legend"—isn't the right word after all.

Maybe it's "legacy."

INDEX

- ABC (American Broadcasting Corporation), 76–77, 173
- Adams, Ansel, 33
- Adamson, Ed, 77
- Addams Family, The* (TV series), 153
- Adventures of Dobie Gillis, The* (TV series), 129
- Adventures of Robin Hood, The* (film), 65
- Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle, The* (TV series), 136
- Alcoholism, in animation, 94–95, 157
- Alice in Wonderland* (film), 58, 128
- Alien Land Law, 25
- Allen, Ray, 97, 142
- Allen, Rex, 145
- All in the Family* (TV series), 142
- Alvin Show, The* (TV series), 99
- Ambro, Hal, 54, 147
- American International Pictures, 160
- American Tale, An* (film), 167
- Anchors Aweigh* (film), 114, 160
- Anderson, Ken, 54, 84
- Annie Awards, 190
- Ann-Margret, 105
- Ant and the Aardvark, The* (TV series), 156
- Appet, Lou, 138
- Aquaman, 152
- Arkoff, Sam, 160, 162
- Ashley-Famous Agency, 159
- ASIFA-Hollywood (International Animated Film Society), 179, 190, 191
- Atom Ant, 108, 112
- Atom Ant/Secret Squirrel Show, The* (TV series), 110
- Avery, Guyla, 93
- Avery, Tex, 5, 89, 93, 156
- Babbitt, Art, 45, 131
- Back, Frederic, 192
- Baez, Joan, 99
- Bakshi, Ralph, 156, 163, 173
- Bamm-Bamm, 169
- Banana Splits Adventure Hour, The* (TV series), 114–17
- Bandit, 111, 124
- Banta, Bill, 71
- Barbera, Jayne, 169
- Barbera, Joseph
 - Academy Awards won by, 185
 - adult-oriented animation by, 140
 - Banana Splits* and, 114, 116–18
 - Bill Hanna: personal relationship with, 89; working relationship with, 92–93
 - Bill Tytla and, 157
 - changing role in studio, 167
 - creative facility of, 104
 - David Kirschner, working relationship with, 171
 - death of, 190
 - different art styles, search for, 112
 - Emmy Awards and, 107–8; slight at, 115
 - feature films produced by, 103
 - Flintstones* and, 94

- Barbera, Joseph (*continued*)
 foreign production studios and, 139
 function as director, 92
 Gene Kelly and, 114–15
 “Godfather” image of, 155–56, 183
Hong-Kong Phooey and, 113
 innovative attitude of, 118
 instilling consciousness in characters, 91
 Iwao Takamoto: personal relationship with,
 190; tribute to, 191; working relation-
 ship with, 103, 109–10, 117–18, 121,
 142, 146, 162
Jack and the Beanstalk and, 114–15
The Jetsons and, 98
Jetsons: The Movie and, 171
Jonny Quest and, 123–24
The KarateGuard, directs, 189–90
 legendary status of, 7
 live action, interest in, 118, 160–62, 165
 loyalty of, 172, 187
 Marineland, association with, 174–75
 MGM, let go by, 84
New Adventures of Huck Finn and, 118
 on-camera appearance by, 150
 personality of, 87
 pet projects of, 165–66
 position within Hanna-Barbera, 134, 185
 as push-pin fight master, 54
Rock Odyssey and, 173
Scooby-Doo, Where Are You! and, 125–27, 130
 selling ability of, 117
 Tom and Jerry series, 5, 91, 92, 96
 trend spotting ability of, 116
 voice casting ability of, 99, 112, 149
 voice directing by, 153–54
Wacky Races and, 121–22
Wait Till Your Father Gets Home and, 142–43
Where’s Huddles? and, 140–41
 wit of, 87, 190
Barkleys, The (TV series), 155
 Barry, Gene, 69
 Batman, 152
Batman Beyond (TV series), 114
 Baum, L. Frank, 168
Bell Telephone Hour (radio show), 77
 Benedict, Ed, 93, 96
 Benton, Thomas Hart, 55
 Bergman, Ingrid, 64
 Berman, Ted, 45
 Bertino, Al, 63–64, 66
Beverly Hillbillies, The (TV series), 109
 Bickenbach, Richard “Bick,” 92, 93, 96, 111
Big Breakfast, The (TV series), 182
 “Big George” (comic strip), 47
 Blair, Preston, 148
 Blanc, Mel, 92, 163
Blondie (film series), 98
 Bluth, Don, 86
 Boomerang, 179
 Brandon, Henry, 59
 Brandt, Spike, 189–90
 Brewer, Jameson, 162
 Brom Bones, animation of, 57
 Bronfman, Edgar, 144
 Bronfman, Edgar, Jr., 144
 Bugs Bunny, 5, 90, 156, 178, 183
 Bullock, Harvey, 97, 108, 142
 Bush, George H. W., 174
 Bushman, Bruce, 104
Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kids (TV se-
 ries), 153
 Butler, Daws, 92, 163
 Cahn, Sammy, 163
 Calvert, Fred, 99–100, 108, 109
 Cambria Productions, 113
 Caniff, Milton, 59
 Cannon, Robert “Bobe,” 99–100
Capital Critters (TV series), 168
 Capp, Al, 59
 Carillo, Leo, 24
 Carlson, Bob, 48, 49
 Carr, Arnie, 100
 Carson, Johnny, 116
 Carter, Dr. Genevieve, 35–36
 Cartoon Network, 177
Cats, 176
 CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), 110,
 116, 140, 154, 168
 Cervone, Tony, 189–90
Challenge of the GoBots (TV series), 165
 Channing, Carol, 164

- Chanticleer* (unproduced film), 84
- Charlotte's Web* (film): character design for, 145; development of, 144–45; Paul Julian and, 146, 149, 163; production of, 146–51; release of, 150, 152; reviews of, 152; script for, 144; success of, 151; voice casting for, 145, 148–49
- Cheech and Chong, 128
- Churubusco Studios, 136
- Cinderella* (film), 58, 82
- Cindy Bear, 103, 104
- Cinemascope, 82, 83
- Clampett, Bob, 89
- Clark, Dick, 160
- Clark, General Mark, 38
- Clark, Les, 50
- Clay, Carleton, 185
- Clutch Cargo* (TV series), 113
- Cole, Cornelius “Corny,” 55
- Cole, Cozy, 47
- Colona, Jerry, 58
- computer imagery, 192
- Conried, Hans, 59
- Coppola, Francis Ford, 183
- Cosby, Bill, 162
- Count Basie, 67, 69
- Cow and Chicken* (TV series), 178
- Crenna, Richard, 160
- Crothers, Scatman, 113
- Curry, Ann, 189
- Curtis, Tony, 105
- Cyrano* (TV special), 153–54
- Cyrano de Bergerac* (film), 153
- Daffy Duck, 5
- Daiei Studios, 72
- Dali, Salvador, at Disney studio, 54–55
- Danger Island* (TV series), 115, 136
- Daphne Blake, 129
- Darren, James, 105
- Davis, Marc: on Art Babbitt, 131; artistry of, 52, 55; *Chanticleer*, development of, 84; coolness of, 80; Disney animator, 49; drinking ability of, 82; facility of, 61; hangover cure, 53; offers encouragement, 85; on-camera appearance of, 80–81; religion of, 45; requesting Iwao work as quality control, 73; sense of class, 52; victim of practical joke, 79–80; WED, work for, 76
- DC Comics, 152
- Deitch, Gene, 144
- DePatie, David, 155
- DePatie-Freleng, 155, 163
- Destino* (cartoon), 55
- Detiege, Dave, 157
- Dexter's Laboratory* (TV series), 178
- DIC, 154
- Dick Dastardly, 104, 121, 122
- Diller, Phyllis, 164
- Dino Boy* (TV series), 112
- Disney, Roy E. (Roy, Jr.), 55, 69, 71
- Disney, Roy O. (Roy, Sr.), 49, 71, 72
- Disney, Walt: automobile of, 78; bitterness over strike, 45; as boss, 14, 71; critique of *Sleeping Beauty* development, 83; demeanor of, 45; dislike of UPA style, 76; function within studio, 54; glee over television deal, 76–77; humanity of, 45–46; Milt Kahl and, 60, 73–74; motivation techniques of, 55; Nick Nichols, regard for, 105; railroad enthusiast, 51; *Sleeping Beauty* and, 82–83; television, reaction to, 76–77
- Disneyland, 76
- Dodd, Jimmie, 77
- Doi, Davis, 184
- Donald Duck, 48
- Donner, Dick, 115
- Dorne, Albert, 59
- Dragnet* (TV series), 75
- Dreamer of Oz, The* (TV film), 168
- DreamWorks Animation, 168
- Driscoll, Bobby, 70
- Droopy, 165
- Droopy, Master Detective* (TV series), 168
- Drysdale, Don, 77
- Dr. Zin, 124
- Dupree, Roland, 59
- Dyer, Bonar, 71, 75
- Dyer, Braven, 71
- Dylan, Bob, 99

- Ebsen, Buddy, 59
 “Eep Opp Ork Ah-Ah” (song), 99, 171
 Eisenberg, Harvey, 92, 93, 94, 95
 Eisenberg, Jerry, 95, 98–99, 100–1, 116–17, 121, 139, 154, 168, 186, 190
 Eisner, Michael, 173
 Ellington, Duke, 69
 Emmy Awards, 107, 115, 160–61
 Emperor Hirohito of Japan, 11, 19
 Engstrom, Andy, 70, 84
- Famous Artists Correspondence Course, 59
Fantasia (film), 128, 148, 157
Fantastic Planet (film), 150
 Ferrer, Jose, 153–54
 Filmmation, 154
 Fischer, Sy, 159
Fish Police (TV series), 168
 Fleischer, Max, 59, 95
Flintstones, The (TV series): classic status of, 137, 165, 175; creation of, 94; design of, 93; feature film of, 105, 144; inspired by *The Honeymooners*, 94, 97; production of, 96–97; television films inspired by, 169–70; voices for, 149
Flower Drum Song (play), 189
 Flynn, Errol, 65
Footy Show, The (TV series), 180–82
 Foray, June, 59, 92, 170
 Foster, Warren, 96, 103
 Four Star Productions, 77
 Fox Kids Network, 157
 Fred Flintstone, 7, 178
 Freddy Jones, 129
 Freeman, John, 49–50, 61, 66–67, 74, 76, 77
 Freleng, Friz, 5, 89, 156–57, 163, 175
Fritz the Cat (film), 128, 150, 163
Fun and Fancy Free (film), 48
Funky Phantom, The (TV series), 137–39
Funny World of Fred and Bunni, The (TV pilot), 161
- Gary Coleman Show, *The* (TV series), 165
Gathering, The (TV film), 160
 Geronomi, Clyde “Gerry,” 61
 Getzler, Bud, 135, 155
 Gibson, Henry, 145
- Gifford, Kathie Lee, 161
 Gila River (camp), 44
Gilligan’s Island (TV series), 168
Go for Broke! (film), 38
 Gollub, Moe, 146
Goober and the Ghost Chasers (TV series), 153
 Goofy, 131
 Gordon, Dan, 94–95
 Great American Broadcasting, 165, 167, 176
Greatest Adventure: Stories From the Bible, The (video series), 165
 Great Gazoo, 97
Great Mouse Detective, The (film), 83
 Green, John, 77
 Green, Johnny, 77
 Green, Stan, 77–81, 95
 Guadalcanal, 37
Gulliver’s Travels (film), 59, 95
- Haboush, Victor, 103, 104
 Hadji, 124
 Hamner, Earl, Jr., 144
 Hanna, Violet, 186, 187
 Hanna, William “Bill”
 ability to cast artists, 99
 Academy Awards won by, 185
 adult-oriented animation by, 140
 Bill Tytla and, 157
 bluntness of, 88, 118
 changing role in studio, 167
 Charlotte’s Web and, 145
 death of, 188
 desire for different art styles, 112
 development of planned animation, 90
 direction by, 188
 The Flintstones and, 94, 96
 footage demands of, 95–96
 foreign production studios and, 138–40
 function as director, 92
 illness of, 184, 186
 instilling consciousness in characters, 91
 Iwao Takamoto: personal relationship with, 188; reliance on, 186–88; working relationship with, 110–11, 118, 155, 169
 Joe Barbera: personal relationship with, 89; working relationship with, 92–93

- Jonny Quest* and, 123, 124
- legendary status of, 7
- loyalty of, 156, 187
- live-action work of, 160
- love of outdoors, 88–89
- Marineland, association with, 174–75
- MGM, let go by, 84
- move into feature film, 103
- musicality of, 69, 173, 188
- narrates *The Last Halloween*, 170–71
- New Adventures of Huck Finn* and, 118
- office of, 185–86
- Once Upon a Forest*, work on, 187–88
- personality of, 87–88
- position within Hanna-Barbera, 134
- Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* and, 130
- Tex Avery and, 156
- Tom and Jerry series, 5, 91, 92, 96, 144
- Hanna-Barbera Happy Hour, The* (TV series), 161
- Hanna-Barbera New Cartoon Show, The* (TV series), 109
- Hanna-Barbera Studio, 55, 84, 107, 111, 118, 125, 155; animator attrition, 154; Cahuenga Boulevard studio of, 100, 178, 186; Cartoon Network, supplier for, 177, 178; comparison with Disney, 90–91; comparison with Warner Bros., 91; design, importance of, 92; different graphic styles of, 108, 112–13; dominance in television of, 135; foreign production studios and, 136–37; Great American Broadcasting, acquisition by, 165; innovation at, 123, 125, 161; limited (planned) animation style of, 86, 90; practical jokes at, 100–1; pulling animators from Disney, 84–85, 103; Saturday morning, producing for, 109, 168; slowdown at, 167, 188; Taft Broadcasting, acquisition by, 134; Ted Turner, purchase by, 177; theme parks, move into, 174–75; union relations with, 138–39; voice casting for, 163–64; Warner Bros., acquisition by, 178; workload of, 159
- Hardcase* (film), 160
- Harlem Globetrotters, The* (TV series), 159
- Harris, Ken, 104, 105
- Hathcock, Jerry, 147
- Hatsukaichi, Japan, 9, 19
- Hayakawa, Sessue, 33
- Hazelton, Gene, 93
- Hearnfeldt, Ed, 67–68
- Heart Mountain (camp), 44
- Heavy Traffic* (film), 163
- Heckle and Jeckle, 155
- Hee, T. (Thornton), 131
- Heidi's Song* (film), 162–63, 173
- Hensch, John, 55
- Henson, Jim, 168–69
- Herculoids, The* (TV series), 112, 113
- Hey There, It's Yogi Bear* (film), 103–5
- Heyward, Andy, 154, 160
- Heyward, Louis “Deke,” 160–61
- Hibler, Winston, 71–72
- Hill, Howard, 65
- Hillbilly Bears, The* (TV series), 109–10
- Hiroshima, Japan, 39
- Hirschfeld, Al, 131
- Hitler, Adolf, 23, 26
- Hollyrock-A-Bye Baby* (TV film), 170
- Honeymooners, The* (TV series), 94
- Hong Kong Phooey* (TV series), 113
- Hooded Claw, The, 149
- Horta, Sam, 71
- House, Billy, 59
- Huckleberry Hound, 90
- Hull, Cordell, 24
- Hunt, Gordon, 164, 170, 172
- Hunt, Helen, 164
- Ichabod and Mr. Toad* (film), 57–58
- I Dream of Jeannie* (TV series), 153
- Imes, Eve, 126
- Inouye, Daniel, 189
- Interment of Japanese Americans: evacuation from homes, 25–26; FDR signs order for, 24; Gila River (camp), 44; Heart Mountain (camp), 44; Manzanar (camp), 3, 28–44; reparations for, 174; Tule Lake (camp), 31, 33, 44
- Invitation to the Dance* (film), 114
- Iron Giant, The* (film), 150
- Ito, Willie, 72, 98, 101
- I Yabba Dabba Doo* (TV film), 169–70

- Jack and the Beanstalk* (TV special), 114–15
- Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy* (radio show), 123, 124
- Jannsen, David, 77
- Japanese American National Museum, 36, 43, 174, 188–89
- Jetsons, The* (TV series): classic status of, 137; creation of, 97; “Eep Opp Ork Ah-Ah” (song), 99; inspired by Blondie, 97
- Jetsons: The Movie* (film), 171–72, 175
- John, Elton, 180
- Johnny Bravo* (TV series), 178
- Johnson, Bruce, 165, 171
- Johnson, Bunk, 8
- Johnston, Ollie: articulateness of, 50; as Disney animator, 49; Frank Thomas, friendship with, 51, 89; illusion of life, theory of, 192; instilling consciousness in characters, 91; railroad enthusiast, 51; realism in animation, 99; rotoscoping, approach to, 59
- Jones, Chuck, 5, 89, 104, 140, 189
- Jones, Volus, 64, 71
- Jonny Quest* (TV series): Alex Toth and, 113–14; animation of, 124; Bill Hanna and, 123; cancellation of, 124; comic book style of, 111; creation of, 123; Doug Wildey and, 111, 113–14, 123; format of, 125; remake of, 125, 177
- Josie and the Pussycats* (TV series), 153
- Julian, Paul, 146, 149, 163
- Jurwich, Don, 130, 168
- “Justice League of America, The” (comic book), 152
- Kahl, Milt: animation of Mme. Medusa, 59–60; bluntness of, 61; described by Frank Thomas, 61; devotion to chess, 60; disdain for rotoscoping, 59; Disney animator, 49; drinking ability of, 82; hobbies, 61; job uncertainty, 84; offers encouragement, 85; on-camera appearance of, 80–81; passion for cars, 78; reaction to critique from Walt Disney, 73–74, 107; reputation of, 57; requesting Iwao work as quality control, 73; show of frustration, 60; teacher of Marc Davis, 52; thought processes of, 57; uncompromising nature of, 50, 57; victim of practical jokes, 62–64
- Kaji, Bruce, 37
- KarateGuard, The* (cartoon), 189–90
- Keefer, Mel, 114
- Keillor, Garrison, 175
- Kelly, Gene, 114–15
- Kennedy, Caroline, 164
- Kermit the Frog, 168–69
- Kerry, Margaret, 59
- Kimball, Ward: Disney animator, 49; Firehouse Five Plus Two, leader of, 51, 66; fondness for UPA style of animation, 51, 76; generosity of, 52; musicality of, 67, 69; plays jazz at Mocambo, 66; railroad enthusiast, 51–52; *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom* and, 76, 105; vision of, 51
- King Features, 118
- Kinney, Jack, 60
- Kirschner, David, 167–71, 176–77, 187
- Knotts, Don, 131
- Kostal, Irwin, 145
- Krofft, Marty, 117
- Krofft, Sid, 117
- Krueger, Al, 71
- Kung-Fu* (TV series), 113
- Kurtz, Bob, 171–72
- Kwicky Koala, 156
- Lady and the Tramp* (film), 73–74, 150
- Lake, Veronica, 74
- Lane, Burton, 163
- Larsen, Eric, 49, 51, 73, 82–83, 85
- Last Halloween, The* (TV special), 168, 170–71
- Last of the Curlews, The* (TV special), 107
- Laverne and Shirley* (TV series), 161
- Lazy Lucy, 104–5
- Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The* (film), 57
- Leo Burnett Agency, 117
- Lethal Weapon* (film), 116
- Ley, Willy, 81
- Limited (planned) animation style, 86, 90, 124
- Lindner, Charles, 165
- Lippy the Lion, 109

- Loesch, Margaret, 120, 157
 Loopy de Loop, 97
 Lounsberry, John, 50, 51
Love, American Style (TV series), 142
 Lovy, Alex, 96, 134
 Lynde, Paul, 148
- MacCurdy, Jean, 157, 178–79
 Mackie, Bob, 161
Magilla Gorilla Show, The (TV series), 109
Make Mine Music (film), 58
 Mallory, Clark, 63, 66
 Maltin, Leonard, 191
Man Called Flintstone, The (film), 105, 171
 Manga, 4
 Mantle, Mickey, 78
 Manzanar: Ansel Adams at, 33; arrival at, 29; description of, 28–30; food at, 34; jobs at, 34–35; leaving, 44; location of, 3; military recruiters at, 38–39; Ralph P. Merritt leads, 33; recreation at, 36–37; reflections on, 193; riot at, 31–32; school at, 34; sports at, 36; Toyo Miyatake at, 33
 Manzanites, 36–37
 Marineland, 174–75
 Marshall, Lew, 88, 96, 106, 134
 Marvel Comics, 132, 164, 165
Mary Poppins (film), 145
 Matthau, Walter, 141
 Mattinson, Burnett “Burny,” 83, 86
 Maynard G. Krebs, 129
 Max, Peter, 116
 McCracken, Craig, 178
 McKimmon, Bob, 89
 McMahon, Ed, 116
 McQueen, Steve, 77
Melody Time (film), 49, 58
 Mendez, Phil, 153
 Merritt, Ralph P., 33
 Messick, Don, 92, 103, 145, 163
Metamorphosis (film), 154
 MGM (Metro Goldwyn Mayer) Cartoon Studio, 5, 84, 93, 95, 106–7, 114, 140, 147, 156, 177, 189
M. Hulot’s Holiday (film), 78
 Michelangelo, 180
 Michener, David, 57
 Michener, James A., 57
Mickey and the Beanstalk (cartoon), 48
 Mickey Mouse, 178, 183
Mickey Mouse Club, The (TV series), 77
 Mighty Mouse, 155
 Miller, Ann, 66
 Miller, Glenn, 67
 Mineta, Norman, 189
 Mitchell, John, 93–94
 Mitchell, Mike, 175–76
 Miyatake, Toyo, 33
 Monday, Ken, 71
 Moore, Archie, 68
 Moore, Fred, 54
 Moorehead, Agnes, 145
Mother, Jugs and Speed (film), 162
 Moxie, 177
Mr. Bug Goes to Town (film), 150
 Mugger, 103, 121. *See also* Muttley
 Munson, Curtis, 23
 Munson Report, 23, 24
Muppet Movie, The (film), 168
 Murphy, Marty, 142–43
 Muse, Ken, 95–96, 147
 Musial, Stan, 96
 Mussolini, Benito, 23
 Muttley, 104, 121, 122. *See also* Mugger
- Nagasaki, Japan, 39
 Nakagawa, Yusaku “Steve,” 72, 154
 Napier, John, 176
 Naturalization Act of 1790, 25
 Nave, Doyle, 70–71
 NBC (National Broadcasting Corporation), 115, 120, 169, 189
 Nelson, David, 150
 Nelson, Mique, 6
New Adventures of Huck Finn, The (TV series), 118–19
 Newman, Paul, 153
 Nicholas, Albert, 67–68
 Nichols, Charles A. “Nick”: animation director at Hanna-Barbera, 105–7, 108; *Charlotte’s Web* and, 146–48; Disney strike and, 45; Emmy Awards, slight at, 107–8; *Heidi’s*

- Nichols, Charles A. "Nick" (*continued*)
Song and, 162; influence at Hanna-Barbera, 106; Iwao Takamoto, working relationship with, 110–11, 134, 159, 162; personality of, 137; timing technique, 69; *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom* and, 76, 105; Walt Disney on, 105–6
Nine Lives of Fritz the Cat, The (film), 163
 "Nine Old Men, The," 7, 50, 54, 91, 111, 147, 157
 Nordli, Ernie, 104
 Nunn, Trevor, 176
- O'Brien, Ken, 59, 79
 O'Hanlon, George, 99, 172–73
 Ogle, Bob, 72, 157
 Oliver, King, 67
Once Upon a Forest (film), 187–88
 100th Infantry Battalion, 38
101 Dalmatians (film), 84
 Oreb, Tom, 56, 62, 83
 Ory, Kid, 8, 67
 Ovid, 154
- Paliwoda, Amby, 60
 Parsons, Johnny, 77, 78
 Partch, Bud, 47–48, 74
 Partch, Virgil "Vip," 47–48, 59
 Patterson, Ray, 106, 154, 188
 PDI (Pacific Data Images), 168
 Pearl Harbor attack, 22–24
 Pebbles, 169
 Peck, Gregory, 77
Pecos Bill (cartoon), 49
 Penelope Pittstop, 122
 Peregoy, Walt, 75
 Perez, Bill, 124, 173
Perils of Penelope Pittstop, The (TV series), 149
Peter Pan (film), 54, 58
Peter Potamus (TV series), 109
 Picasso, Pablo, 81, 180
Pink Panther, The (TV series), 156
Pink Panther and Sons (TV series), 156
 Pixar, 192
Popeye (TV series), 165
 Powell, Dick, 77
Powerpuff Girls, The (TV series) 178
- Practical jokes, 47, 62–64, 79–80, 100–1, 108
 Pratt, Hawley, 163
 Precious Pupp, 110
 Prima, Louis, 161
 Proctor, Bill, 169
Pup Named Scooby-Doo, A (TV series), 131
- Quick Draw McGraw, 97
 Quimby, Fred, 185
- Race Bannon, 124
 Randall, Tony, 145, 148
 Rankin, John, 24
 Reagan, Ronald, 173
 Redford, Robert, 153
 Red Hot Riding Hood, 148
Red Shoes, The (film), 79
 Reitherman, Wolfgang "Woolie," 50, 51, 71
 Republic Pictures, 168
Rescuers, The (film), 59
 Reynolds, Debbie, 145
 Ritter, John, 168
 Robertson, Pat, 165
Rock Odyssey, 173
 Rockwell, Norman, 59
 Rogers, Ginger, 66
 Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 23, 24, 26, 39, 44, 46, 50
 Rotoscoping, 58–59
Rowan and Martin's Laugh In (TV series), 116
 Ruby, Joe, 125–28, 130, 154, 155, 160
 Ruby-Spears Productions, 154, 155, 160, 162, 177
 Ruff and Ready, 90, 178
 Rushing, Jimmy, 67
 Ruth, Babe, 78, 96
- Sanrio, 154
 Sassa, Scott, 177, 189
Saturday Night Live (TV series), 128
 Scheimer, Lou, 154
 Schlossberg, Ed, 164
 Schwarzenegger, Arnold, 182
 Scooby Dee, 130
Scooby-Doo, 7, 112, 128–33, 136, 165, 175, 178, 189, 192
Scooby-Doo, Where Are You! (TV series): clas-

- sic status of, 137; development of, 126–27; foreign production of, 137; format of, 125; naming of, 125; rumors regarding, 128–29; success of, 127, 130, 132, 153, 183–84
Scooby-Doo on Zombie Island (video film), 184
 Scooby Dum, 130
 Scott, Martha, 145
 Scrappy-Doo, 130–31
 Screen Gems, 100
 Scully, Vin, 81
 Searle, Roland, 56, 153
 Secret Squirrel, 108, 112
 Sederberg, Scott, 179
 Seeger, Pete, 99
 Seibert, Fred, 177, 179
700 Club, The (TV show), 165
 Sgroi, Tony, 124
Sgt. Bilko (The Phil Silvers Show) (TV series), 97
 Shadduck, Jane, 82, 84, 102
 Shaggy Rogers, 127, 128, 131, 136
 Shearer, Moira, 79
 Sherman, Harry, 161
 Sherman, Richard M., 145, 150
 Sherman, Robert B., 145, 150
Shootout in a One Dog Town (film), 160
Shrek (film), 168
 Sidney, George, 160
 Silverman, Fred, 109, 110, 116, 120, 125–27, 130, 141, 159
 Simonelli, Charlie, 101
 Sinatra, Frank, 88, 125
 Singleton, Zooty, 8, 67
Sleeping Beauty (film), 61, 81–84, 100
 Smith, Keely, 161
Smurfs, The (TV series), 156, 164, 165
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (film), 58
 Snyder, Ken, 109
So Dear to My Heart (film), 52
 Sommer, Paul, 134
Song of the South (film), 58
 Sonny and Cher, 131
Sorcerer's Apprentice, The (cartoon), 148
South Park (TV show), 128
Space Angel (TV series), 113
Space Ghost (TV series), 112, 113
 Spears, Ken, 125–28, 130, 154, 155, 160
Speed Buggy (TV series), 153
 Spence, Irv, 96, 147
 Squiddly Diddly, 108
Starlight Express, The, 176
 Sterns, Leslie (stepdaughter), 101–2
 Stimson, Henry, 24
 Stoddard, Brandon, 154
 “Strangers in the Night” (song), 125
 Stromboli, 157
Super Friends (TV series), 152
 Superman, 152
Superman (film), 116
 Suzuki, Pat, 189
 Taft Broadcasting, 134, 136, 154, 159–60, 162, 164, 165
 Takahashi, Victor, 42, 68
 Takashi, 143, 154
 Takamoto, Akino (mother), 9–11, 27, 173
 Takamoto, Barbara Farber (wife), 26, 88, 101, 108, 180, 193
 Takamoto, Chitoshi (father), 9–11, 13, 27, 32, 44, 82
 Takamoto, Iwao
 affect of Pearl Harbor attack on, 23–24
 animation by, 73
 appears on poster encouraging internees to leave camps, 46
 Astro, design of, 98
 attitude toward military service, 39
 awards received by, 179, 189
 Banana Splits, designs costumes for, 117–18
 baseball injury of, 70
 baseball team at Disney, member of, 69–71
 bilingual ability of, 12–13, 72
 Bill Hanna: personal relationship with, 188; working relationship with, 110–11, 118, 155, 169
 Bill Tytla and, 157
 birth of, 11
 birth of son, 82
 Bobe Cannon and, 99–100
 boredom factor of animating, 105
 breakdown artist at Disney, 48
 breakup of marriage, 84

Takamoto, Iwao (*continued*)

brother's death, 11
 calligraphy, use of, 13
 caricature ability of, 131
 cars, passion for, 78
Charlotte's Web and, 144–51
 childhood of, 14–16
 children's entertainment, viewpoint of, 142
 computer animation, opinion of, 192
 creative producer title of, 135
Cyrano, designs for, 153
 designing characters, techniques for, 112
 diplomacy of, 74
The Dreamer of Oz and, 168
 D-Wing at Disney, joins, 49
 Emmy Awards, slight at, 115
 encouragement from Marc Davis, 85
 encouragement from Milt Kahl, 85
 evacuation of family, 27
 fondness for Mont Blanc pens, 56
 4-F status of, 42
 freelance work of, 99, 108
 friendship with Jerry Eisenberg, 98–99,
 100–1
 friendship with Willie Ito, 98, 101
 as “genius” of Hanna-Barbera, 107
 Great Gazoo, design of, 97
Heidi's Song, takes over story direction, 162
 Hillbilly Bears, designs of, 109–10
Hollyrock-A-Bye Baby and, 170
 inbetweens at Disney, 46
 influence of Disney training, 111
 interest in folk music, 99
 interview at Disney, 6
I Yabba Dabba Do and, 169–70
 jazz, devotion to, 61–69
Jetsons: The Movie and, 171–72;
 Joe Barbera: personal relationship with,
 190; tribute from, 191; working rela-
 tionship with, 103, 109–10, 117–18,
 121, 142, 146, 162
 John Freeman, mentored by, 61
 journey to Manzanar, 28
The KarateGuard, works on, 189–90
 knowledge about wine, 62
 laid-off at Disney, 49

late bloomer designation of, 111
 layouts by, 157–58
 legendary status of, 7–8, 193
 live action experience, 118–19
 Manzanar, interment at, 29–44
 Marc Davis, mentored by, 52
 marriage to Barbara Farber, 101–2
 marriage to Jane Shadduck, 82
 Milt Kahl, assistant to, 57–64
 motivation techniques of, 55
 Nick Nichols, working relationship with,
 110–11
 Nine Old Men, opinions of, 50–52
 offer of lead animator job at Disney, 85–86
 on-camera appearance by, 150
 own studio, offers of, 154
 Penelope Pittstop, design of, 121
 position within Hanna-Barbera, 134–35
 practical joke, victim of, 74
 practical joke on Marc Davis, 79–80
 practical joke on Milt Kahl, 62–63
 pronunciation of name, 12
 quality control function for Disney, 73–74,
 82
 reaction to Pearl Harbor attack, 22
 recognition of artistic ability, 16–17, 19,
 36, 85
 relationship with father, 13–14
 reparations for interment, reaction to, 174
 resigns from Disney, 85–86
 revises design of Cindy Bear, 103
 revises design of Lady, 74
 Salvador Dali and, 55–56
Scooby-Doo, designs for, 125–30, 133
 seeks different graphic styles for Hanna-
 Barbera, 112–14
 sensei to Steve Nakagawa, 72
 shikata ga nai (philosophy), 9, 21, 31, 85
 sketchbook of, 36, 43, 193
 smoking habit of, 52
 speaking appearances by, 174, 179–83
 storyboarding by, 104, 105, 119–20, 142,
 169–70
 as student, 13, 16, 19
 theme parks, works in, 174–75
 trip to Japan, 17–20

- Wait Till Your Father Gets Home* and, 142–43
 Walt Disney and, 45
 Warner Bros., role within, 179–84
Where's Huddles? designs for, 140
 work as farmhand, 39–40
 Takamoto, Kimiko (sister), 11, 27
 Takamoto, Michael (son), 82, 84, 101–2, 156
 Takamoto, Norito (brother), 11, 27, 33
 Tannen, Ned, 160
 Tartakovsky, Genndy, 178
 Tashlin, Frank, 89
 Taylor, Robert, 163, 173
 TECO (Taft Entertainment Company), 159–60, 162, 165
Teenaged Mutant Ninja Turtles (TV series), 104
 Terrytoons, 154, 155
That's Entertainment II (film), 114
 Thomas, Frank: articulateness of, 50; Disney animator, 49; on evolution of Disney Animation, 83; illusion of life, theory of, 192; instilling consciousness in characters, 91; on Milt Kahl, 61; Ollie Johnston, friendship with, 51, 89; realism in animation, 99; requesting Iwao work as quality control, 73; rotoscoping, approach to, 59; teacher of Marc Davis, 52
Three Musketeers, The (TV series), 114
 Tiffany, 172
 “Tillie the Toiler” (comic strip), 100
Tom and Jerry Kids (TV series), 168
Tom and Jerry series, 5, 91, 92, 96, 104, 106, 140, 165, 188, 189
Tom Sawyer (film), 150
Tonight Show, The, 116
 Tonka Toys, 164, 165
Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom (cartoon), 51
Top Cat (TV series), 97
 Toth, Alex, 113–14
Transformers (TV series), 165
 Travelina, Fred, 161
 Tufts, Warren, 114
 Tule Lake (camp), 31, 33, 44
 Turner, Ted, 177, 178
 Turner Broadcasting, 177–78
 Tytla, Vladimir “Bill,” 157–58
Underdog (TV series), 136
 Universal Pictures, 101, 144, 160, 171–72, 175, 176
 UPA (United Productions of America), 51, 76, 99
 Urbano, Carl, 106, 163
 Van der Pyl, Jean, 92, 163
 Van Dyke, Dick, 131
 Vaughan, Sarah, 68
 Velma Dinkley, 129
 Viacom, 155
 von Braun, Werner, 81
Wacky Races, The (TV series), 121
Wait Till Your Father Gets Home (TV series), 142–43
 Waldo, Janet, 99, 163, 170, 171
 Walker, Clint, 160
 Wally Gator, 109
 Walt Disney Studios, 3–5, 46, 64, 107, 169; animators moving to Hanna-Barbera, 84; backlot of, 75; baseball team, 69–71; badminton court, 76; career path for artists, 46–47; Christmas parties at, 53; comparison with Hanna-Barbera, 90–91; D-Wing in animation building, 49–51, 65, 74, 79; expansion of, 75; financial trouble of, 49; Hyperion Street studio, 80; Japanese American artists at, 72; Jewish artists at, 45; layout of studio, 69; move into live action, 76; and the Nine Old Men, 7, 50, 54, 91, 147, 157; politicization of, 86; practical jokes at, 62–64, 74, 79–80; rotoscoping process, 58–60; slow-down in 1950s, 84; soundstage construction, 75; strike by workers, 45; sweatbox (screening room), 54–55
Waltons, The (TV series), 144
Wanted: Dead or Alive (TV series), 77
 Ward, Kelly, 176
 Warner Bros. Studio, 5, 91, 99, 150, 162, 178
 War Relocation Authority (WRA), 40, 46
 Warren, Earl, 24
 WDI (Walt Disney Imagineering), 76
 Webb, Jack, 75

- Webber, Andrew Lloyd, 176
WED (Walt Elias Disney). *See* WDI
Welch, Ken, 161
Welch, Mitzi, 161
Welch, Raquel, 162, 170
West, Howard, 167
What A Cartoon! (TV series), 178, 188
Where's Huddles? (TV series), 140–42, 149
Whitcomb, John, 59
Willey, Doug, 111, 113, 123
Williams, Garth, 145
Williams, Richard, 69
Wind in the Willows, The (film), 57
Winsome Witch, 110
Winsor McCay Award, 179, 191
Winters, Jonathan, 164
Witherspoon, Jimmy, 67
Wizard of Oz, The (film), 168
Wolf, Fred, 104, 105
Wonder Dog, 152
Wonder Woman, 152
Wrigley Field, 78
Wynn, Ed, 58

Xerography, 84

Yellow Submarine (film), 118
Yogi Bear, 90, 117, 144, 165, 175

Zorro (TV series), 75

“What an amazing story. What a wonderful book. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I never got to meet Mr. Takamoto, but after reading his book, I felt as if I had met a great new friend and experienced his incredible life experience.”

—JERRY BECK, animation historian and author of *Looney Tunes: The Ultimate Visual Guide*

“Iwao Takamoto was a legendary figure in the world of animation, but working as he did in the studio system he was always part of a team effort. I’m so glad this book is being made available so we can appreciate him as a solo artist.”

—LEONARD MALTIN

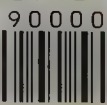
“It’s like having a conversation with Iwao and being able to ask him any question you like about his life and career. The first three chapters closely reveal what life was like in early Los Angeles and the Manzanar camp where the West Coast Japanese-Americans were sequestered during the second World War. The book is full of anecdotes about Iwao’s co-workers and mentors such as Milt Kahl, Frank Thomas, Marc Davis, Bill Hanna, Joe Barbera, Jerry Eisenberg, Fred and Kimi Calvert, and many others. This is one of the best books I’ve read on life in the industry and life in general from a real working artist. Get this for your cartoon bookshelf—you will want to read it again and again.”

—MARK KAUSLER, animator and animation collector

IWAO TAKAMOTO (1925–2007) was a celebrated animation artist and character designer for Walt Disney Company and Hanna-Barbera Productions. MICHAEL MALLORY, a freelance writer and animation historian, is the author of *Hanna-Barbera Cartoons* and *X-Men: The Characters and Their Universe*, among other books. WILLIE ITO retired from Disney Studios after a forty-five-year career in the industry.

University Press of Mississippi
www.upress.state.ms.us

ISBN 978-1-60473-194-1



9 781604 731941

Photo credits: (top) Greg Preston, sampselpreston.com; (bottom) SCOOPY-DOO, MUTTLEY, ATOM ANT, and all related characters and elements are trademarks of and © Hanna-Barbera. Used courtesy of Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.